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JULY 1990 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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*Men at Work: Novak on Will, Gold on Caro*

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# We said it. Did you read it?


# GRANT'S

INTEREST RATE OBSERVER

Vol. 8, No. 2 233 Broadway, New York, New York 10279 (212) 608-7994 FEBRUARY 2, 1990


(Before the Journal, before Forbes— profitably ahead of its time.)

## Trump for the bid

A coincidence in the latest *Playboy*: Donald J. Trump, the subject of the *Playboy* interview, and Miss March, Deborah Driggs, share the same basic philosophy of life. Says Miss March ("from sunny Southern California"): "I'm daring. I'm outgoing, edgy—an explorer. There's not a lot I haven't done, but if you have any ideas, try me." Says Trump: "As long as I enjoy what I'm doing without getting bored or tired... the sky's the limit."

So, then, go for it! But Trump's remarks contain an undercurrent of caution. Do you regret having gloated about missing the 1987 stock market panic? *Playboy* asks. Trump replies, "No," but adds, surprisingly: "I think the cash market is the great one right now—cash is king, and that's one of the beauties of the casino business."

Cash is king? In the principality of real estate, debt has always ruled. True to real-estate custom, Trump says he prefers to use other people's money, and the division of his risk and his lenders' is rarely disclosed....

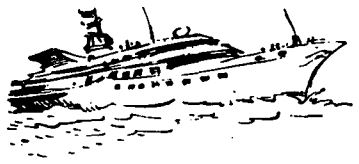
To *Time*, which asked about his net worth, Trump replied, disarmingly: "Who the f—— knows? I mean, really, who knows how much the Japs will pay for Manhattan property these days?"

The answer to that rhetorical question would seem to be: They will pay less than they used to pay. Credit has begun to contract around the world. In New York City, the locus of Trump's operations, big banks are pulling back from real-estate lending. Interest rates are rising (here and abroad), and bids, in general, are falling. Risk rates of interest are rising faster than government rates. Two years ago, Trump's Atlantic City mortgage bonds were quoted in the neighborhood of 13%- 14%. On Tuesday, the Taj Mahal 14s were quoted at 76 bid, to yield almost 20%. The Trump's Castle 13¾s fetched 87, to yield almost 16%. Either Trump has become less secure or his creditors are imagining things....

We approached the Trump problem mainly by deduction, starting with a set of syllogisms: All real-estate operators are leveraged. Trump is a real-estate operator. Therefore, Trump is leveraged.

Then: Trump is leveraged. Leverage magnifies volatility. Therefore, Trump's affairs are volatile.

Finally: Trump's affairs are volatile. In a contraction, the direction of volatile change is down. Therefore, Trump's affairs are likely to worsen.



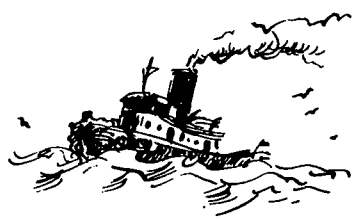
Trump Princess - 282 feet (leveraged)

Just as a credit expansion lifted Trump's net worth, so should a contraction reduce it, sharply. In New York City, residential real estate is making heavy weather of it, and even the Hero of Wollman Rink may not emerge unscathed....

An integral part of the Trump lifestyle is income, and a bear market may deplete even the prospective Trump resident's. So when word got out that Trump's ultra-fabulous, world-wowing motor yacht, the 282-foot Trump Princess, is up for sale, we thought we smelled a liquidation. *USA Today* gave the story the bull-market, gee-whiz treatment: "Real-estate super magnate Donald Trump finds his 282-foot motor yacht somewhat limiting. He's trading up to a $200 million, 420-foot flagship that will feature a Roman bath, an amphitheater and a crew of 46.... The old yacht is cruising the South Pacific in search of a buyer. Price tag: $115 million....

For us, we will believe the $115 million when we see it....

One of the beauties of the casino business, Trump told *Playboy*, is that it produces cash. To judge by the action in his publicly traded bonds, however, Trump's Atlantic City gambling emporia are not producing it fast enough. On the evidence of the junk market, of course, every creditor of every public debt issuer is sweating nowadays. Nevertheless, Trump has fallen under suspicion for special reasons. First is his exposure to real estate in general. The second is his exposure to Atlantic City in particular. In December, a month of arctic cold, gross revenues in Atlantic City fell by 7% from December 1988; for the full 12 months, 11 casinos registered a gain of just 2.6%. In a new report, Salomon Brothers has questioned the security of the mortgage debt of Trump's Castle Funding Inc. (which is the bond issuing entity of the casino of Trump Castle, the old Atlantic City Hilton). For one thing, said the report, coverages are falling. As against 1.32 times interest expense in 1988, earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization will



Tugboat - 110 feet (unleveraged)

suffice to cover the interest bill by just 1.17 times in 1990. For another thing, the casino this year must begin to set aside large sums of cash to satisfy the first of an annual series of sinking-fund payments. Probably, Salomon notes, the Trump partnership will draw down $24 million in an available credit line. Even so, the report projected a 1990 cash deficit of more than $13 million. It cited, last but not least, the competitive menace of the Trump Taj Mahal, slated to open April 2. Trump may eat his own lunch. ("Anyone who bought the [Trump's Castle] bonds is earning an exceptionally good return and the bonds are now selling at a premium."—"Art of the Deal," page 162.)

The Atlantic City Taj is three times bigger than the Indian original....

Including interruptions, the project has been under way for eight years. Finished, it will encompass four million square feet on 17.3 acres and accommodate 50,000 visitors, who, Trump expects, will lose (or otherwise deposit on the premises) at least $1 million a day....

Thus, the course for a creditor of the Taj Mahal or of Donald Trump is clear. He should round up all available customers and ship them (by bus, if necessary) to the Taj on opening day in April. He should lobby the Treasury Department against any further tightening of cash-reporting rules for casinos (although it appears that on this question the die is already cast). He should call the attention of the fiscal and monetary authorities to the nascent credit contraction, demanding relief. He should insist on a resumption of the global bull market in equities (the better to furnish the Plaza with guests and the Trump Parc with residents who can afford to pay their electricity bills). He should discreetly arrange for someone of means to buy the Trump Princess—perhaps a Third World country in need of a well-appointed minesweeper.

Trump claims to be a man of the people, and John Britton, touring Atlantic City, found no evidence to the contrary. "All cab drivers love him," said Patrick Gilroy, an Atlantic City hack. "He brings a lot of jobs and class to the city." In that case, the significance of some future cancellation of "Trump," the show, might be more far-reaching than people imagine. Five full points off the Michigan survey of consumer confidence is our best guess—Trump, we think, would insist on nothing less.

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# The "Bashing" of Israel

## Who does it? What is behind it?

The Administration, the media, and spokespersons of all kinds are increasingly careful not to offend any minority, ethnic community or lifestyle groups. But there is high season and ever-increasing volume and stridency in the "bashing" of Israel–in the print and broadcast media.

## What are the facts?

■ Israel is a very small country, less than half the size of San Bernardino County, California. Its Jewish population is approximately 3.5 million, just about the population of Iowa. Compare that to the 22 Arab states, armed to the teeth, and virtually all of them in a state of war with Israel. They have over 140 million inhabitants and a land area larger than that of the United States. From its founding, Israel had to fight every day for its survival.

■ Israel is constantly being hectored and admonished by sanctimonious visitors, who lament Israel's "abuse" of its Arab population. Bishop Tutu made the false analogy between the condition of the blacks in South Africa and the status of Arabs in Israel. That is totally unfair.The blacks in South Africa are disenfranchised and politically impotent. The Arabs in Israel have the vote, have every civil right, are members of the Knesset(parliament), and members of Israel's diplomatic service. Nelson Mandela physically embraced that arch-terrorist Yassir Arafat and made the gratuitous statement that Zionism is a "unique form of colonialism". What a colossal lie! Zionism is the national liberation movement whose purpose has been for 2,000 years to restore Zion, the ancient land of Israel, to the Jewish people. One must marvel at the love affair of the South African black leadership with the Arabs. It is the Arabs who, even today, keep black slaves; it is the Arabs who continue to engage in genocide against blacks in such countries as Chad, the Sudan and Mauritania; it is the Arabs who for years have fueled apartheid by selling millions of barrels of oil to South Africa: It is the Arabs who by their extortionist pricing of oil have brought ruin and famine to many countries of black Africa.

■ Ex-president Carter, in his recent swing through the Middle East, visited Syria, but did not have one word of unfavorable comment about that aggressor country and its regime. How strange! It is a country whose record of executions, torture, imprisonment, and utter abuse of even the most fundamental human rights is almost unsurpassed. President Carter did not talk about any of that. He talked about "human rights violations" by the Israelis against the stone throwers and Molotov cocktails hurlers in the administered territories. He did not mention that it is only because of Israel's abiding respect for human rights that the "intifada" has been allowed to go on for so long. Any of the Arab rulers would have known how to handle such an uprising "efficiently" had it occurred in his own country.

■ Disconcertingly, our own Administration is beginning noticeably to "tilt" to the Arab cause. Israel is the *only* country in the Middle East where Western concepts of law, decency and human rights prevail. It is the only country that has free elections, a free press, unrestricted right of movement of its citizens and, of course, unlimited right of dissent. Besides, Israel is the staunchest ally of the United States—not just in the Middle East, but in the entire world. It is a priceless defensive asset of our country—where, in contrast to NATO or Japan/Korea, not a single American soldier needs to be stationed. How strange that our Adminstration would be so grimly fixed on imposing a PLO state on Israel and that it questions thelegitimacy of Israel's possession of Jerusalem. And how strange that the Administration would constantly wish to strong-arm Israel, oblivious to Israel's constant struggle for survival in a sea of implacable hostility, but at the same time remaining silent about the Arab tyrannies in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and all the others.

Why is so much Israel bashing going on? Why do such obviously decent people as our President, Secretary of State, former president Carter and so many columnists, commentators, pundits, television personalities and "liberals" of all stripes identify with the tyrannical Arab regimes, with governments that have terror, kidnapping, torture, attacks on innocent civilians and assaults on commercial aircraft as their official policy? And why do they oppose and criticize Israel, a country that started from scratch, little more than 40 years ago, and which, despite being under constant attack, has built a prosperous nation and a thriving society that surely could be a model for all developing countries? Could the sad answer be that it is a reincarnation of good old-fashioned anti-Semitism, which for almost twenty centuries has been the curse of Western society? No longer tolerated in its cruder manifestations, it now seems to be acceptably sublimated in the bashing of the state of Israel which, deep down inside, so many do not really wish to survive.

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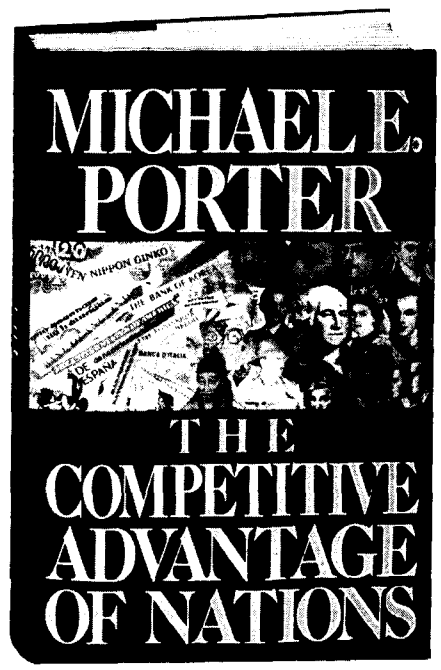


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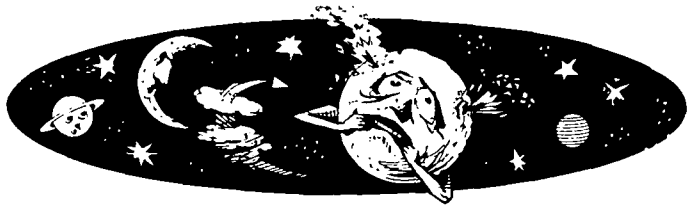
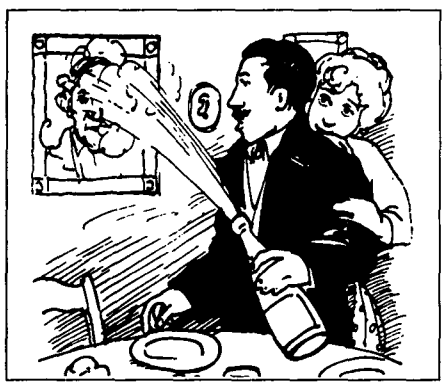


• May is now past and the boredom goes on. Nineteen-ninety may well swoon into the history books as the Republic's most tedious year since 1889, when, the *Encyclopedia of American History* (6th ed.) tells us, only two things happened domestically, both in February. Yet the Republic may be jumping again soon. At the beginning of the month, it was reported in a national newspaper of considerable influence that George Herbert Walker Bush's White House has been engaged in "the biggest government coverup since Watergate."

• According to the May 1 edition of the *Sun*, a White House "handyman" working on a boiler in the basement stumbled upon an eight-foot-tall "alien corpse" that had been "hidden away by bigwig officials in yet another attempt to keep the American public from learning the truth" about extra-terrestrial life—that is to say, life unlike anything found on this earth or in Marin County, California. The "handyman" also discovered documents authenticating the corpse's identity and cause of death, which he handed over to an acquaintance at the Pentagon. Mr. Ben Snark, an investigative reporter for the *Sun*, has interviewed the anonymous Pentagon employee and found him to be no dummy: "Outraged over the coverup of such an earth-shattering event, the Army official asked the handyman to sneak the alien's corpse out of the White House so it could be turned over to the media." Somehow Chief of Staff John Sununu got wind of the plan and had the corpse whisked away before the handyman could take action; but the handyman and his Pentagon confrère have maintained control of the documents. If they can ever make contact with Carl Bernstein or Bob Woodward, the sky's the limit.

• Dr. Richard Berendzen, president of American University, checked into the Sexual Disorders Clinic of the Johns Hopkins University. On May 23, Dr. Berendzen, a long-time reader of the *New York Review of Books* and *Scientific American*, was convicted of making off-color telephone calls to women who advertised home day-care services in Washington newspapers, which might not be as bizarre as it seems. At West Valley City, Utah, it took day-care officials two hours to decide that a man dressed like a baby girl and mingling with the children was a "possible pervert." What threw them off was that a telephone caller posing as a University of Utah dean had told them he wanted to punish a student cheat by enrolling him temporarily in the center. When a six-foot three-inch, 220-pound Caucasian in his late twenties arrived, wearing a little girl's pink dress, bloomers, pink slippers, and a diaper, the day-care operators saw nothing amiss; though as they reported to the local newspaper, "he wore heavy pink



make-up and blue eye shadow, and . . . a pink bonnet." He also sucked on a pacifier and "often had his hands in his diaper, but [employees] did not become suspicious until nap time" when they made him sleep alone. Finally rested and refreshed, the man was asked to leave by the center's supervisor, who recognized the intruder as having shown up at another of her centers two years ago claiming he was participating in a fraternity initiation rite. The man remains unidentified at this writing, though he does put one somewhat in mind of radical columnist and cross-dresser Mr. Alexander Cockburn.

• In Seoul, Korea, Miss Choong Sonah died instantly when she leapt from the eighth floor of an apartment building during an exceptionally ambitious impersonation of Wonder Woman. In Tallahassee, Florida, relief was felt all around when Governor Bob Martinez assured the citizenry that the state's electric chair was not seriously damaged during the electrocution of Mr. Jessie Tafero, formerly a killer of policemen. Mr. Tafero was dispatched on May 4, but the authorities who administered a trinity of 2,000-volt shocks became alarmed when flames, sparks, and a puff of smoke appeared several inches above his head. However, technicians, who were called in to examine the valuable instrument, pronounced it in good running order, needing only a sponge replacement. There is evidence that the Ku Klux Klan is moving to the left. Concerned about "Nazi Klans" that advocate violence and undemocratic behavior, four hitherto unassociated Klans united on May 20 into one stupendous entity, the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc., which will have nothing to do with any klavern remotely touched by Nazi philosophy or machine politics and which will adopt as its governmental model precepts very similar to those of the League of Women Voters.

• Upon hearing President Mikhail Gorbachev's plans to implement a "regulated market economy" in the Soviet Union, Lenin's children responded accordingly and instantaneously bought up all that was buyable in Soviet shops. Animal rights activists were given plenty to cheer about. In Florida they prevailed on the Martin County Fair commissioners to cancel their annual greased pig contest; and in Fort Pierce, Florida, activists have moved against Westwood High School's "Kiss A Pig III," in which participants pay to vote for their favorite candidate to kiss a pig. The kissing, according to Miss Marian Lentz of the Animal Rights Foundation of Florida, is "very scary and very stressful" to pigs—a clear case of what the shrinks call projection, eh Miss Lentz? But the activists' best news came from Iran where Mr. Al-Asghar Ahani, a hunter, was shot dead by a snake that cleverly coiled itself around the man's gun.

• Evidence that Mrs. Margaret Thatcher's political prospects have improved came when May's local elections went less badly than expected, despite the grim fact that an outbreak of traditional British Mad Cow Disease is sweeping the United Kingdom, driving, according to Gallup surveys, as many as a quarter of British households to drop roast beef from Sunday lunch—a catastrophe certain to have played into the hands of Mrs. Thatcher's adversaries. In St. Louis, Missouri, Miss Maia Brodie, she of the toothsome bottom, has won a $27,500 civil settlement from Mr. Charles Hurth, III who insists he was merely paying Miss Brodie a "compliment" when in a festive mood he sank his teeth into her buttock. Mr. Hurth, a lawyer, testifies that on at least two earlier occasions the recipients of his esteem were actually quite flattered. Truth be known, Mr. Hurth got off lightly. In Camden, New Jersey, Superior Court Judge John B. Mariano sentenced prison inmate Mr. Gregory D. Smith to twenty-five years in the calaboose for biting a sheriff's officer. Mr. Smith, 26, is an AIDS sufferer who injudiciously bespoke whilst biting the officer three times, "Now die, you pig. Die from what I have." Loose lips sink ships.

• On May 29 Mr. Boris Yeltsin was crowned czar of the Russian Republic. On May 31 President Mikhail Gorbachev sat down with President George Herbert Walker Bush for the first meeting of their Washington summit. President Bush granted most favored nation status to China. And from China comes exciting news for conservationists concerned about future energy sources. The *China Youth News* reports that the grandmother of Mr. Tong Tangiang has seen smoke pouring from his pants; where there is smoke there is energy! "In two hours from 8 a.m. till 10 a.m. Tong spontaneously ignited four times," boasts the *China Youth News*. Greek authorities have incarcerated Mr. Giorgio Pascanello, an Italian national, for biting off a choice piece of his wife's tongue while on holiday. "We were kissing," explained Mrs. Pascanello, "but suddenly Giorgio went wild and started biting me."

• In Greenwood High School outside of Indianapolis one student was wounded when Officer Terri Gann of the Greenwood Police Department delivered an unusually impassioned version of her gun control talk. Apparently, during the lecture she drew her gun and accidentally shot Mr. Philip D. Myers, 17, who was unarmed at the time. Congratulations to Miss Sandy Caron, 47, of Jacksonville, Florida. Miss Caron was the scene of the largest ovarian tumor ever surgically removed in the state of Florida. *Science News* on May 12 made bold to report that chewing tobacco is an excellent source of dietary protein. May saw the passing of Messrs. Carl "Spitz" Channell, Sammy Davis, Jr., Jim Henson, Murray



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Kempton, Walker Percy, and Howard Ross Hale, the Western Union telegrapher who relayed H. L. Mencken's news reports from the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial.

• Park rangers at Mitchell Caverns Natural Preserve outside of Needles, California, have charged the film crew of that moral colossus Mr. Oliver Stone with defacing priceless limestone caverns, an act that Mr. Elden Hughes of the Sierra Club asserts is "absolutely criminal," and illustrative of "total disrespect for a tremendous and rare resource." In Denver, Colorado, an army surgeon, Col. Edward L. Modesto, has been charged with conduct unbecoming an officer for engaging in homosexual acts and indecent exposure at the Hide N' Seek Club in Colorado Springs. He also is accused of dressing in a wig and women's clothing and exposing himself at nearby laundromats. Col. Modesto is an oral surgeon. Finally, the Sacramento, California, City Council's female majority has risen as one to demand that women too share in the honor and glory associated for so long with the name "manhole" cover. Henceforth, the noble objects will be called "person-access chambers." Let the world laugh! *—RET*

# CORRESPONDENCE

**A Family Affair**

Mercifully, I am not in the habit of reading *The American Spectator*, so your May issue, containing separate attacks on two members of my family, has only just come to my attention.

My brother-in-law, Larry Agran ("The Evil Emperor of Irvine, California," by David Brock), is alive and well able to defend himself. My father, Henry Fairlie, on the other hand, is dead—a fact Mr. Terzian points out with apparent relish ("Fairlie Tales," by Philip Terzian). I do not intend to go through the tedious list of errors, nor even take issue with Mr. Terzian's sleazy tone. However, my genetic makeup does not allow me to remain completely silent.

Firstly, I have never been a "stranger at best" to my father. I cannot imagine how Mr. Terzian feels qualified to make such a judgment. His presumptuous statement is inaccurate and offensive.

Secondly, I should be intrigued to hear how Mr. Terzian thinks that my father was "jailed in Britain for failure to pay alimony" when Henry was still married to my mother, his only wife, at the time of his death.

Mr. Terzian should confine his comments to underwear. It is a nice, safe subject, and one in which he evidently takes an interest. *—Charlotte Fairlie*
*Danville, Kentucky*

Philip Terzian's recent "article" on Henry Fairlie is one of the lowest and meanest-spirited literary savagings that it has been my radical displeasure to encounter anywhere at any time. Ostensibly offered in the spirit of *The American Spectator*'s long-nurtured neo-Menckenesque irreverence and fierce no-prisoners policy towards its many philosophical enemies, the piece in fact goes far beyond the boundaries of even the most feverish and personal guerrilla journalism (a thing dear to that usually more discriminating redskin, R. Emmett Tyrrell). It is nothing other than a vile and bottomlessly malicious literary assault, made despicable in that its victim is a man who, lowered to his grave just weeks ago, is not even capable of defending himself. One considers the many years during which Mr. Terzian could have defamed a *living* Henry Fairlie, and the conclusion is unmistakable: Mr. Terzian's is an act of repulsive and indefensible moral cowardice.

Indeed, Mr. Terzian even further dishonors himself by mocking the very circumstances of Fairlie's death. His gleeful dancing upon a fresh grave; his incessant and unrestrained viciousness might be more understandable were Ceausescu, or Pol Pot, or some other such moral monstrosity his victim; directed instead at an old Tory journalist whose worst crimes seem to have applied to too great a taste for Scotch and a "treasonous" accommodation with the neo-brats at the *New Republic*—it can only seem grotesquely inapt, pathological in its mercilessness. Another monstrosity is unintentionally revealed.

This odious and indeed ghoulish performance is also (or ought to be) deeply insulting to conservative and neoconservative readers, for it assumes that they share Mr. Terzian's belief that, where ideological enemies are concerned, everything is permitted. I suspect that most readers, irrespective of their position along the ideological spectrum, will reject Mr. Terzian's nihilism; that just as they would despise a big game hunter stalking and killing already-dead prey, so they will despise Mr. Terzian's equally dishonorable act.

Let me conclude by saying that, whatever Henry Fairlie's failings (and Mr. Terzian succeeds superbly in making them seem minor compared to his own), Fairlie was one thing that Terzian is not and never will be—namely, an always interesting and at times magnificent essayist and reviewer. That the Scourge of the *Providence Journal* knows this, and that it bubbles at the black heart of his essay for all to witness, is not least among the reasons why the vast majority of readers must reach for the industrial-strength soap upon finishing this wretched exercise in journalistic barbarism.

*—Colonel B. P. Regan*
*Grafton, Massachusetts*

**Dissertation Abstracts**

You must protect P. J. O'Rourke. Good he is always, but he will never reach higher heights or deeper depths than in "Mood Swings in Managua" (*TAS*, May 1990). But you must feed him and fan him because he will keep trying to better himself, than whom there is none better.

Benchley was funny. H. Allen Smith amusing. Tyrrell is wry and witty on his good days. But the likes of this P. J. O'Rourke require disinterring the brilliant and obscene shades of Mark Twain, H. L. Mencken, and (yes!) Westbrook Pegler (all of whom were brilliant and oftentimes downright dirty).

Such a compound might rank or be ranked with P. J., who turns the *mot juste* into the *mot depravant* (whatever that means).

Never mind that P. J. picks a tragicomic event for his sardonic feast. The juicy banquet he makes of it is a carnival of hilarity. P. J.'s humor is *mean*: viz. Bianca—"*one bummed-out show biz lefty*" (right out of Algren). Or Jimmy Carter: "*the most ex- of America's ex-Presidents.*" (Anyone—Wilde, Royko, or Voltaire—would have liked to have said that!) And about not letting drunks vote in Nicaragua: "*They let Teddy Kennedy vote in the Senate.*" (Possibly JFK?)

P. J.'s wickedness carries provincial "shawlie" wisdom with its carnivore thrust: "*the paradigm of socialism—the public restroom.*" "*The general air of thuggishness over all 'mass' political movements.*" Earrings "*which many women wear, too.*"

P. J. knows how to handle vulgarity, which is handled, if at all, in brash, loud, unmistakable style. His each looms visibly like a turd in the punch bowl: "*doberman mouth party colors.*" "*Buildings that won't fall down if urinated against.*" "*Racoons eating fish guts.*" "*Greying underarms.*" "*Merit badges in Lenin and poor hygiene.*" Ignazio Silone wrote like this and is considered a master. If Markham-Millet's "Man With the Hoe" could have written, he would have written like this.

P. J. is a master and needs to be protected. His mind is a frightfully busy zoological environment all on its own. The very conceptualization of forcing dictators "*to go condo,*" or grinding Dukakis "*into a fiber supplement,*" or "*looking important wearing sunglasses after dark*"—these are all master strokes. They are glittering baubles of derision brightening his essay of cruel, cruel irony.

The man is self-indulgent, too. I must wonder how many of your readers understood (*really* understood) the full import of the last dart he threw, mostly, I suspect, for his own pleasure: "*Tomorrow, Japan!*"

*—Burr McCloskey*
*Chicago, Illinois*

**Peggy Should Sue**

Is this going to be a regular feature at *TAS*? Every year, some prominent conservative is to be put on the ducking stool so that we can all watch the merriment when the correspondence column boils over two months later? If so, you might consider changing the format of your renewal notices. Some of your more squeamish subscribers might want the option of checking a box marked "Please omit annual fratricide/sororicide issue."

Failing that, at least try to be more original in your choice of hatchetings. The "Damned-If-I-Can-Give-You-A-Reason-But-I-Hate-Peggy-Noonan-So-Much-I-Could-Just-Bust-Open" subspecies of conservative achieved cultural clichehood some time ago. Rarely, if ever, has anyone been the object of so much vagrant animosity on the right.

Gone are the days when people said *non amo te* and let it go at that. Nowadays elaborate formulae for abuse have been developed. In her cover piece on Peggy Noonan, Mary Eberstadt doesn't miss a trick ("Peggy's Turn," *TAS*, May 1990).

How is the thing done? Without much difficulty. First, assess the enemy. Are her gifts such that denying them would only make a fool of you? Then don't. Excessive pretense can ruin this enterprise, and, anyway, magnanimity in malice is too gratifying a pose to be foregone. Faint praise, that's the ticket. Call her "talented." Admit that she can write "perfectly nicely, *sometimes* beautifully." If you're feeling really big, try giving *one or two* of her feats

*(continued on page 46)*



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# EDITORIALS

## WHY NEW YORK?

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

*New York*

Of all the cities in America, New York City is most closely associated with reform. It is the source of America's most refined humanitarian sensibility, as Vergèze is the source of France's finest bottled water. It is here in New York that the hobo and the street loon have, of a sudden, been given the same rights and privileges as a pensioner walking along Central Park South (hence, the pensioner walks at his peril). For sixty years, New York City has been the capital of progressive ideas.

Well, then, how has it in the span of but a few years descended into being the scene of the most vicious racial antagonism, probably, in American history? Mayor David Dinkins may argue it his way; I shall argue it mine. I spend a week or so here every month, and no city in this century—north or south—has tolerated so many protracted racial conflicts without reestablishing order via the cops or the courts. While the authorities here wring their hands and beat their breasts innocent people are being abused and racial hatred intensifies.

Now New York has again demonstrated its capacity for innovation. No longer are the conflicts bilateral—black against white—but they are now trilateral with Orientals joining—or more precisely being dragged into—the brawls. The talk around Manhattan today is that New York has recently made a great leap upward in its quest to become the Beirut of America; it is plagued by petty terrorists in its best neighborhoods and tyrannized by gangs of brutes in its worst. What is more, there is no loyal opposition to the governing political party. New York is a one-party city. It has no immediate hope of electoral relief. If it were a Southern city the troops would have been called in long ago; but New York is the seat of progress and so the misery and hate can never be candidly addressed.

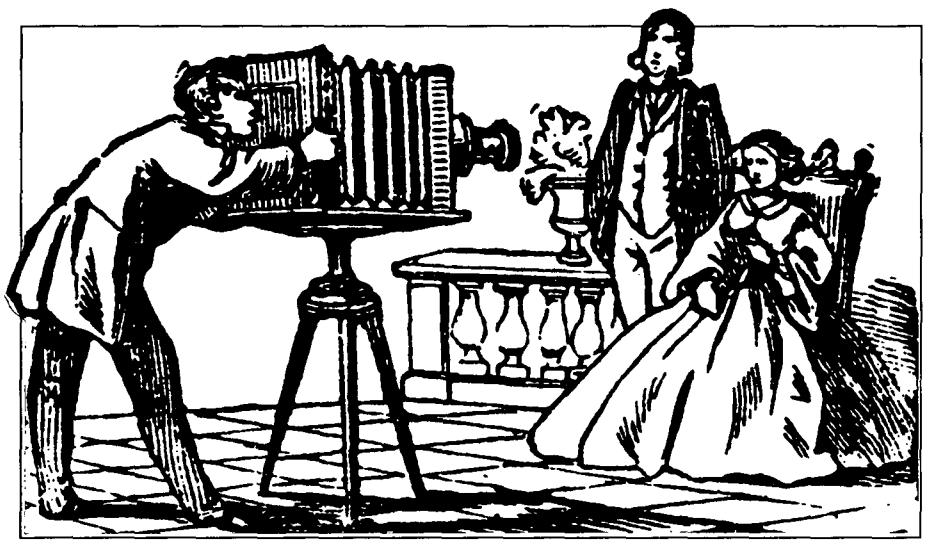
Actually there is a logical reason why racial animosity escalates in this progressive city, but let me first note another racial atrocity that has gone curiously unreported here. Sure all have heard about the white mob in Bensonhurst that chased down four blacks, leaving one murdered. It is widely known that for months a mob of professional demonstrators representing a 1960s-style black liberation front has been demonstrating in front of a Korean market where a Korean grocer had accosted a Haitian woman engaged, supposedly, in shoplifting. Along with these ongoing conflicts there is now the case of the three Vietnamese who were furiously assaulted by a black mob.

But here in this great city there is another story of hate and violence that goes unremarked. Mr. Stephen Murphy, a lawyer for one of those white youths accused in the Bensonhurst murder, was set upon by the black mob that regularly has been appearing in front of Brooklyn's State Supreme Court. While leaving the trial for lunch, he was punched in the face, kicked in the back, and chased into a nearby restaurant. Police at the scene did eventually come to his protection, but they made no arrests.

The right to counsel is one of the elementary guarantees in our law. Lawyers may be among the country's most prominent nuisances (along with journalists), yet when engaged in defending unpopular causes their role according to progressive thought is practically sacred. Unfortunately, as of this writing no outrage has been expressed by the enlightened of this city. The Bar Association has been silent, as has the American Civil Liberties Union, the presiding judge, and the editorialists at every paper save the gallant *New York Post*. In fact the story has hardly been reported. The *New York Times* devoted exactly five sentences to it, after which it has followed the bizarre practice of running two pictures, one of Mr. Murphy's restaurant sanctuary besieged by a mob and the other of the glum lawyer being escorted by the police to some unidentified location—possibly he was catching a flight to free Lithuania.

New York has fallen upon such barbarous times precisely because it has accepted tumbledown Liberalism as its governing philosophy, and that tortured and misapplied philosophy fosters only anger and complaints. It advances absurd rights and denies personal responsibility. It has turned its back on all its honorable old principles owing to its own hypocrisy and cowardliness. If you think these words too harsh visit Brooklyn's State Supreme Court; and bring a lawyer. □

*Adapted from RET's weekly* Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*



## CONGRESS ON ICE

*Washington*

Tall, tanned, and presidential, George Herbert Walker Bush, seated at lunch in the little patio garden aside his White House office, wondered aloud the other day as to where so many of the pernicious bills now circulating through Washington are coming from. They are coming from 1968, Mr. President. Or, more accurately, they are coming from congressmen who have learned nothing from the past two decades. For solons such as Senator Edward M. Kennedy the 1970s and the bankruptcy of welfare politics never happened nor did the 1980s and the triumphs of the free market. Thus he duly promotes the Kennedy-Hawkins Act with its implicit racial quotas and threats of onerous litigation against almost any institution that does not embrace quotas.

At the present moment an astounding mass of legislation is grinding out of the congressional baloney grinder as though the experience of the past twenty years has been purely illusory. Some of it, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Clean Air Bill, and the Fair Housing Amendments Act, promises to heap costs on business that will far transcend their debatable benefits. It is as though all the scholars who applied themselves to cost-benefit analysis in the 1970s had never lived. Much of this new legislation opens vast areas for litigation and governmental coercion in America's hitherto flourishing private sector. Hence the economic growth that has been the marvel of the 1980s is going to be ended by the legislation of reactionaries shackled to the ideas of the past, and these ignoramuses call themselves progressives.

The Kennedy-Hawkins Civil Rights Act of 1990 would more accurately be titled the Civil Wrongs Act of 1990. Based on the experience that we have now had with quotas it is obvious that this legislation will ensure the persistence of racial bigotry, damage black self-esteem, and leave the deeply impoverished inner-city black still further



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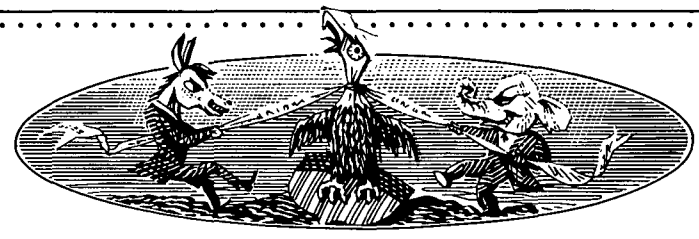
back in history's wake. It will make job seeking somewhat easier for middle-class blacks who have no particular difficulty finding employment today. But for the lawyer whose mentality is that of the ambulance chaser it will be a boon. His opportunities to exploit indignant members of minority groups will expand stupendously, and with jury trials and punitive damages now possible in bias suits the graduates of every third-rate law school in the country can aspire to the life-style of an F. Lee Bailey.

Senator Kennedy's quotas will, as experience has demonstrated, further postpone the realization of a color-blind society and an era of racial harmony. Moreover, they will do nothing for the impecunious black who needs better education, crime-free neighborhoods, a strong family structure, and an end to the economic regulations that stifle self-help and black entrepreneurship. Those are the ideas that brought revival wherever they were implemented in recent years. They are the ideas sweeping Eastern Europe, reaching even the far reaches of Moscow and Peking. But on Capitol Hill it is all 1968, high hopes for the welfare state, and more power for Big Government's noble lords on Capitol Hill.

The reason that neither recent experience with free markets nor recent scholarship on the failures of government intrusions into the private sector has penetrated Capitol Hill is that few congressional seats are subject to competitive elections. Thanks to gerrymandering, political action committees, and a large arsenal of government perquisites that the Congress has voted to itself, a seat on Capitol Hill is practically a matter of lifetime tenure. Over 98 percent of the incumbents won re-election in the last House elections. Once the smiling pol has a seat there he is set for life. The same party has prevailed in the House of Representatives for thirty-six years—a one-party dominance comparable to what one might find in Mexico, South Africa, and the USSR.

All three of those countries have recently shown themselves open to new ideas. When will the fossils on Capitol Hill realize the times they are a-changing? Perhaps never. Certainly Senator Kennedy will never change. I think the next time I see him I shall ask him when the hell the Vietnam war is going to end or if he will stop by and listen to the new Beatles album with me.□

# CAPITOL IDEAS



## GETTING OFF THE DOLE

by Tom Bethell

Recently the Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole of Kansas, proposed that U.S aid to Israel (and to the four other largest recipients of our aid, Egypt, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Turkey) be cut by five percent. It is assumed by everyone I have spoken to that in this Dole had the tacit support of the Bush Administration. In March, Secretary of State James A. Baker told a congressional committee that aid to all these countries should be "shaved." But Dole's proposal went nowhere, seventy-three senators immediately signing a letter to President Bush, opposing the cut.

At about the same time we began to see the outlines of a campaign by the policy-shapers, including the press, to rewrite the U.S. foreign aid law. (Front-page articles by the *Washington Post*'s John Goshko on May 17-18 plainly showed the press in its policy-shaping role.) Susan Rasky of the *New York Times* referred to Senator Dole's "running battle with Israel and those who lobby for it," resulting in "a public tongue-lashing from younger Republican conservatives." She added that in private Dole's critics tell a different story. "They won't say it out loud," Dole told her, "but they'll grab you in the cloakroom and tell you: 'You're right. But I can't say it because I'm running.' "

Dole's position on aid for Israel, and the subsequent discussion of aid, have suffered from the following confusion: everyone—Dole himself, his administration supporters, the secretary of state, the Democrats who want to rewrite the foreign aid bill so that they can heap more dollars on more countries, and probably also Dole's "younger Republican conservative" critics—accepts the premise that foreign aid really is helpful to the countries that receive it. From this it follows that reducing aid will hurt the recipient country; increasing it will help. The belief that aid is efficacious enjoys overwhelming bipartisan support on Capitol Hill. For contemporary liberals, of course, the value of government-sponsored income redistribution is bedrock faith. It underlies almost every program they support. Republicans of the Bush-Dole-Michel generation make it unanimous.

The truth is that international aid is injurious to recipient nations, just as intra-national transfers (from the suburbs to the inner cities) are injurious to the inner cities. The British economist P. T. Bauer has repeatedly said this, but he has been on his own, more or less. Countries that receive U.S. aid become "addicted" to it, remaining poor in every instance, retaining their eligibility for aid by remaining below the qualifying per capita income level. Some countries have been greatly impoverished by U.S. aid, a recent case being Egypt, now declining to Bangladesh living standards.

Foreign aid always goes from government to government, where it acts as a kind of methadone, partially insulating the officials who spend it from the bad effects of their policies. The people become impoverished and their overlords don't feel the pain. At that point the economic performance of these welfare nations is unlikely to improve unless they are accused of human rights violations. Their aid may then be reduced or threatened (South Korea and Chile fell into this category, El Salvador is now in it), and then, with a bit of luck, wealth-generating rather than dole-seeking policies are pursued.

If this analysis is accepted, and in Washington it is still very much an "insurgent viewpoint," according to Daniel Pipes, director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, a paradox stares us in the face: reducing aid to Israel, far from hurting it, would help it. And increasing aid to other countries not so far contaminated by our largesse, would hurt them.

But if *that* is true, why is there still so much Jewish support for aid to Israel? One answer is that many Jews don't accept the analysis. But some do: Jewish support for aid to Israel may well be declining. I became aware of this while in Israel a couple of months ago. In the course of a conference organized by Daniel Doron of the Israel Center for Social and Economic Progress (discussed in my May *TAS* column), we went to the northern part of the country, and as we traveled about in the bus I was intrigued to note that a good many of the participants thought it was time that Israel got "off the dole," if the pun will be forgiven. One or two said that, with more Ph.D.s per capita than any other country in the world, it was humiliating that Israel could not make its own way in the world. Others recognized that, without aid, Israel would no longer have to kowtow to the State Department.

Most of these people, among them Milton Friedman of the Hoover Institution, are careful to draw a distinction between economic aid (amounting to $1.2 billion a year) and military aid ($1.8 billion), continuing to support the latter. On the subject of economic aid, Stuart Eizenstat, President Carter's chief domestic policy adviser and now a Washington lawyer, who has made a dozen trips to Israel in recent years, pointed out something that one rarely reads in the newspapers: Almost all of this aid is used to repay loans made years ago to Israel by the U.S. According to Karen Stewart, the economic officer on the State Department's Israel desk, of the $1.2 billion Israel receives at the beginning of the year, about $1.1 billion in principal and interest repayments is sent back here at the end of the year. (They get to keep the interest that meanwhile accrues.)

Eizenstat's recommendation is that this complex transferral of money from one U.S. pocket to another, with an in-

*Tom Bethell is* The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*



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termediate stop in the Bank of Israel, should be ended; that the loans to Israel should be forgiven, in other words, and our economic aid discontinued simultaneously. (More on this proposal in a minute.) One of the people listening to Eizenstat in the bus made the interesting rejoinder that senators and congressmen would be unlikely to support the change, because they are so eager to be seen publicly as supporters of Israel.

This person did not want to be identified, and since returning to the United States I have found, when the subject of aid to Israel is brought up, that public reticence and private disapproval is common among American Jews. "Off the record . . . " they will say, and then tell you that Israel should get off the dole, that aid is destructive, addicting, and so on.

This public silence on aid to Israel has, I believe, sown confusion about aid in general. Jews who are influential in the policy-shaping community tend to be reticent on this particular aspect of public policy—foreign aid—knowing that if they criticize it, their anti-aid arguments will apply to Israel. This in turn might be construed as disloyalty, a country which "already has enough enemies as it is," and so on. But why disloyalty? If aid really is bad, then it really is bad for Israel too, and the country (like all others) would be better off without it. You do no service to a friend by refusing to tell him his faults (dole-seeking). The non-debate on foreign aid would finally spring to life if the presently anonymous, pro-Israel aid-skeptics were to go public.

One of the main problems is that Dole's present position is seen as antagonistic to Israel, rather than a case of frustrated generosity (a desire to reallocate the aid pie). As a result, there is a tendency to respond to his intentions with reciprocal antagonism and to forget about the possibly good effects of a reduction in aid. Former assistant secretary of state Elliott Abrams is one who does try to separate out bad intentions and good effects. He first quotes Justice Holmes to the effect that even a dog knows the difference between being kicked and being tripped over. Israel is being kicked, he said. Still, it *is* time the country was pressed to reform its economy. "When you consider the abilities of the people who live there," he said, "you have to give credit to socialism for impoverishing the country." Even a booming Israel "would require some military help," he added, "but less than it is now getting."

There are plenty of others who oppose economic aid. Alvin Rabushka of the Hoover Institution and a senior fellow of the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies in Jerusalem, published a bold attack on foreign aid in the *Jerusalem Post* in February. "When will American Jews rebel against demands for larger contributions primarily to sustain socialism?" he wrote. Post-Dole, the *Jerusalem Post* itself (hawkish, these days) editorially noted in mid-April that "Israel cannot yield to pressure at the expense of its own vital interests. But it should understand that internal American pressures to reduce foreign aid are real, and that the day when Israel will have to overhaul its economy and become self-reliant is near. If Dole's message brings this day closer, his mission will have been a blessing."

On the same day the paper ran a column by Gerald M. Steinberg, a member of the political science faculty at Bar-Ilan University, who began: "As an Israeli, I agree with Senator Dole's call for reducing the level of U.S. aid to Israel." Stef Wertheimer, a prominent pro-free-market businessman in Israel said recently: "Our Dear American Friends: If you really want to help us—don't help us. If you really want to support us—don't do it with money . . . your gift of money distorts and corrupts us, making us eternally dependent on you. It's only when you


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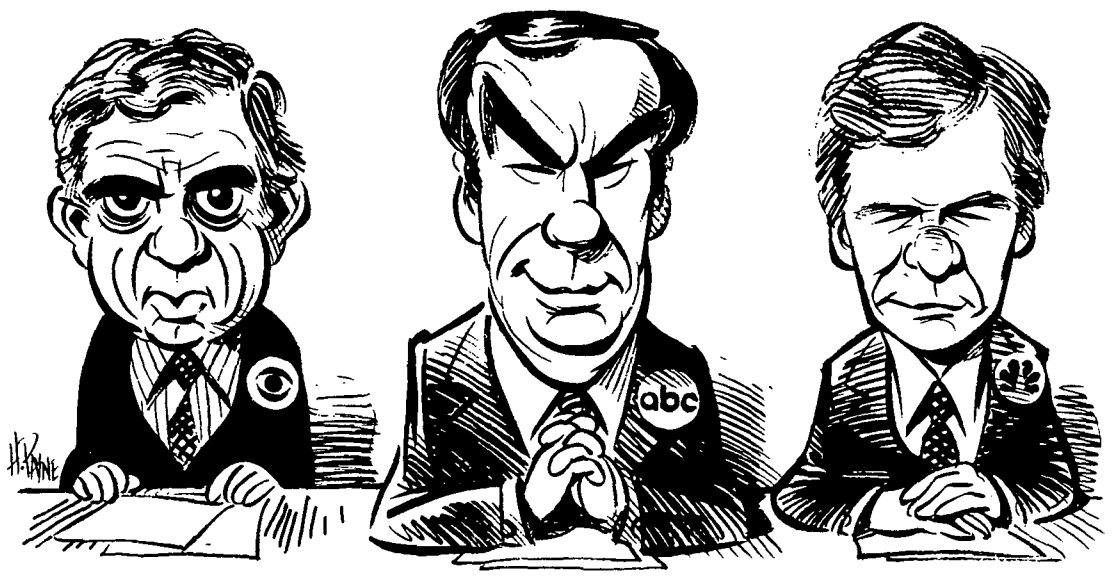


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*MediaWatch* is invaluable and it is great fun to read. It engages in the terribly unfair practice of quoting people accurately, a particularly nasty thing to do to the press. Keep it up!

*— Elliott Abrams, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs*

Big media, like big government, become dangerously arrogant if their power is unchecked. That's why it's so refreshing to see *MediaWatch* serving as a watchdog of the same powerful people that pride themselves on being the watchdogs of everyone else.

*— Congressman Vin Weber*

Every month when I receive *MediaWatch*, I can just see and hear the leftwingers in the major media gnashing their teeth. Bravo to *MediaWatch* for exposing the hypocrisy in so much of what's going on among the 'news' business in our time."

*— Senator Jesse Helms*






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stop supporting us that we will have no choice but to stand on our own two feet." Howard A. Cohen, the president of Operation Independence in New York (a group of international business leaders who support Israel's economic independence) favors a plan to phase out economic aid to Israel over a ten-year period. Daniel Pipes agrees. "The key is to end the addiction with a phased reduction of aid over a specific period." He, too, noted the "fear of being seen as an accessory to Dole." Amos Perlmutter, an Israeli expatriate (of whom there are several hundred thousand in the United States), who teaches political science at American University, also favors a reduction of aid to Israel, and he wrote an article to this effect several years ago in the *Wall Street Journal.* (He believes that aid to Israel, Egypt, and the other leading recipients should be cut not by five percent but by 50 percent.) But he believes that Dole's approach is counter-productive, its instant repudiation by so many senators possibly even encouraging bigger aid requests by current recipients.

About $350 million of its $1.8 billion military aid is sent in the form of a check to Israel. The remainder stays in the U.S. where it is used to purchase hardware from U.S. defense contractors, e.g., F-15 and F-16 fighters, AWACS planes, tanks, missiles, and rockets. According to Wolf Blitzer, formerly the *Jerusalem Post*'s man in Washington (now with CNN), Israel receives approximately $500 million in additional aid, some for the Arrow Program (anti-ballistic missile defense), some for more arcane military expenditures. If we subtract the $1.1 billion with which Israel repays its loans, and the $1.45 billion spent here for military hardware, it seems that Israel itself actually sees, every year, about $1 billion in aid from the U.S. Still, this is quite a lot in a $30 billion economy.

According to Mike Van Dusen, who works for the Europe and Middle East subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Egypt, Turkey, and possibly one or two other countries also repay their U.S. debts with some portion of their foreign aid disbursements. In effect this money (possibly adding up to a billion dollars—Van Dusen wasn't sure exactly) never leaves the U.S. Treasury. He added that Eizenstat's proposal—to forgive the debts and cancel the aid that is used to repay them—is one of the options that Rep. Lee Hamilton, the chairman of the committee, is now considering. Is this a good idea? Yes and no. Its drawback is that it would immediately lead to the claim by Democrats (and Republicans would, as always, tag along lamely) that foreign aid had now been reduced by that amount (by $2 billion, say, if we include Israel), so that $2 billion was now "available" to hand out to other, more "needy" nations. And so still more countries would go on the dole. What I am saying is that foreign aid that never leaves the U.S. Treasury (or only leaves it for a few months, as with Israel's economic aid) is probably as harmless as aid can ever be. We should be wary of *any* aid suggestions coming from liberal Democrats. What they really want is more aid going to more countries.

The best thing would be for Senator Dole to say that he would like to cut aid to Israel, Egypt, etc. so that they can become more independent of the U.S. and less prone to adopt socialist policies. But there is little chance that he will ever say any such thing. He belongs to that generation of Americans (and in this regard there really isn't a dime's worth of difference between Republicans and Democrats much over the age of 50) who all their lives have believed that you can buy friends around the world by giving them taxpayers' dollars. It has done nothing but harm, it is harming Israel, and let us hope that the Jewish community soon unites against it. □


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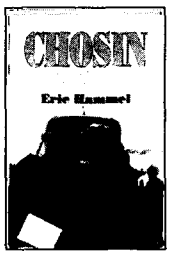
- ❑ 
  
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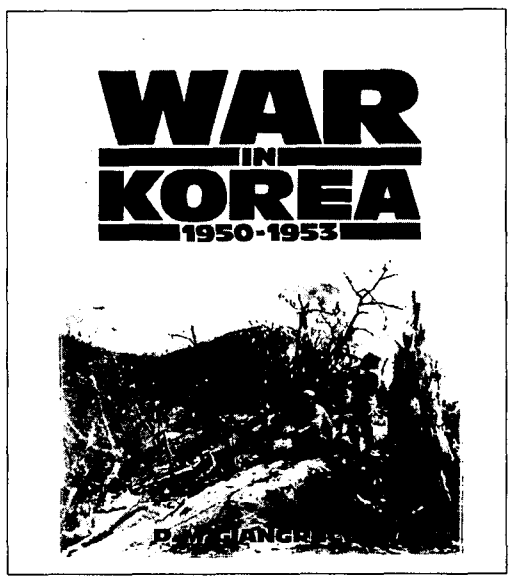


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Maurice Cranston

# THE BATTLE AX AND THE POLL TAX

May's local elections in Britain didn't turn out half as badly for Mrs. Thatcher as predicted, suggesting that if she does a better job in elucidating the controversial Poll Tax, her Conservatives will remain in power.

Before the local elections in Britain in May, pollsters predicted widely that Neil Kinnock was on line to beat Margaret Thatcher in the next general parliamentary election. All the public opinion surveys in April reported a swing of 20-25 percent in voters' intentions from Conservative to Labour. What actually happened in the local elections was a swing of only 11 percent to Labour in England, while in Scotland the Conservative vote rose by 2.5 percent and in London the Conservatives captured two councils from Labour and substantially increased their majorities in the councils they already held. Financial institutions breathed again; the pound rose two cents on the foreign exchange and shares rose by nearly twenty-eight points on the stock market. Mrs. Thatcher declared that her policies had been vindicated.

The Conservatives now claim that they, and not Mr. Kinnock, will win the next general election, which is bound by law to take place before the end of 1992. How justified is their confidence? One thing the elections proved is that the pollsters got it wrong. A more reflective political science is called for than that provided by their methods. There is something to be learned from studying how votes were cast in those local districts, or "wards" as they are called, which correspond to parliamentary constituencies. Such a study suggests at first sight that Kinnock has the support where he needs it most. If British voters were to vote in a general election as they voted in the local elections in May, the Labour party would have a majority in Parliament of fifty seats or more. Experience shows, however, that people do *not* vote the same way in local and national elections. For one thing, the smaller center parties have much more support in local than in national politics, if only because they are capable of winning seats in councils to an extent they are incapable of winning seats in Parliament. Many center party votes are likely to be switched in a general election to the Conservatives, as they were in 1987.

Past Conservative successes evidently owed much to the personal popularity of Mrs. Thatcher and past Labour failures owed something—perhaps rather less—to the personal unpopularity of Kinnock. Mrs. Thatcher has no longer such widespread popularity or Kinnock such widespread unpopularity. Kinnock's current prestige is due partly to political shrewdness and partly to luck. Shrewdness has prompted him for some time now to adopt a posture of smiling incoherence, rather like that of Jimmy Carter at the time of his election to office. Nobody can quite make out what Kinnock proposes to do about anything, but the noises he makes are reassuring. His luck has been that the revolutionary changes in Eastern Europe in 1989 have diminished people's anxieties about defense, the one subject on which Kinnock's views are known and known to be unsound. He has also been fortunate that the leading Labour leftists, Michael Foot, Tony Benn, and their kind, have yielded the limelight to likable new men such as Bryan Gould and John Smith, lawyers who know how to charm the middle-class voters without antagonizing the workers.

Mrs. Thatcher in the meantime has had the bad luck to lose certain assets that cannot be replaced. For one thing, she no longer has her old partnership with Ronald Reagan on the center stage of world affairs. Since she knew more about international relations than he did, and he knew more about people than she did, each gained from their friendship, and Mrs. Thatcher was able to stand beside Reagan as a formidable world leader. George Bush, with his altogether more aloof and reserved approach to diplomacy, is obviously no closer to Mrs. Thatcher than he is to François Mitterrand or Helmut Kohl, and this leaves Mrs. Thatcher looking an isolated figure nowadays at those summits where images seem to count as much as anything.

Ironically, the very triumph of Mrs. Thatcher's ideas about the free market and democracy in Eastern Europe and elsewhere seems to have left her out of step with other European leaders on the question of how to respond to the decline of Communism. Continental politicians tend in times of crisis or challenge to make utterances of elaborate and high-minded rhetoric that sound good in French or Italian or Greek, but commit them to nothing very clear and do not even sound good in English. Kinnock is in his element with this sort of thing, and not just because he is Welsh: but Mrs. Thatcher is much too English to relish it. She likes to hear plain speaking. When continental politicians plead for a "closer union of Europe," for example, she wants to know whether they are inviting the bureaucrats of Brussels to take over the regulation of the twelve member states of the European Economic Community at the expense of those states' sovereignty. Since this is just about what they are doing, the continental politicians get cross with Mrs. Thatcher for disturbing the noble harmony of words with such a brutal unveiling of meaning.

Mrs. Thatcher is not a reluctant European. She would like to see a loose association of every European state, including Hungary and Poland and other

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Eastern countries as well as the twelve of the EEC, but as this project seems to resemble de Gaulle's old formula of *L'Europe des patries*, she is easily misrepresented as an out-of-date nationalist, which is how she is almost universally depicted in the European media today. She no longer even receives the credit when British foreign policy wins general approval. That credit now goes to Douglas Hurd, a much more vigorous and eloquent foreign secretary than his predecessor, Geoffrey Howe, who always looked so dull and somnolent that he was widely assumed to be Mrs. Thatcher's lap dog. Hurd, with his air of patrician and dynamic independence, is held responsible for what is liked about British diplomacy and Mrs. Thatcher for what is disliked.

Even so, the diminished stature of Mrs. Thatcher as a superwoman on the international scene would not in itself put off British voters, although it might prompt some to favor a change of national leadership, to ask themselves whether someone possessed of a different style—Michael Heseltine for example, with the Tarzan image he acquired when minister of defense—might not impose the national will more effectively on the world.

What clearly did put many British voters against Mrs. Thatcher, and caused the Conservative party to lose 359 seats in the local elections, was her government's economic record: inflation bordering on double figures annually, interest rates higher than they have ever been and set to stay high, the worst trade deficit in years, more strikes, public services working badly, and wages going up without any increase in industrial productivity. But here again Mrs. Thatcher is personally blamed for the consequences of policies forced on her by the Treasury, and notably those pursued when Nigel Lawson was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mrs. Thatcher was never wholly at ease with the Treasury line, and the economic adviser on her private office staff, Sir Alan Walters, was said to have pointed out to her the arguments against it. As everyone knows, Lawson resigned from the government rather than tolerate the continued presence of his critic on Mrs. Thatcher's staff. Without knowing exactly what advice Sir Alan gave her, we may be sure, in the light of his published opinions, that he opposed Lawson's policy of going all out to prop up the pound through high interest rates and other forms of financial intervention to keep it in line with the Deutschemark. Walters always favored letting market forces prevail.

Lawson's 1987 budget is said to have helped the Conservative party win the general election that followed soon afterward; its tax-cutting promises looked attractive, but its long-term effects, coupled with those of his cult of the Deutschemark, were not so good. People were encouraged to spend, to take advantage of easy credit at low interest rates: then, a few months later, interest rates were hiked substantially and inflation mounted. Moreover, the British people are saddled with various charges connected with the welfare state that are taxes in all but name, and these bear most heavily on the less well off.

**The Conservatives now claim that they, and not Mr. Kinnock, will win the next general election, which is bound by law to take place before the end of 1992.**

For example, after Lawson's budget, a man in the lower income bracket of £12,000 a year found himself paying in taxes and such quasi-taxes as the "national insurance contribution" the same 30 percent of his earnings as a man in the £24,000 a year bracket. In sociological jargon, people in the upper-working class and the lower-middle class were disappointed by the outcome of Lawson's budget, and since they represent an important section of the electorate, being that most prone to swing between Labour and Conservative, Mrs. Thatcher could not well afford to lose their support. The more conservative budget of Lawson's successor, John Major, has evidently done something to repair the damage, but the economic health of Britain is still well below what it was in the first seven or eight years of Mrs. Thatcher's time in office.

No thinking voter, however, could expect the economy to do better under Labour. Under Wilson's government the situation was much worse, particularly in the crucial matter of inflation, which was twice as bad as its worst under Mrs. Thatcher. The Labour party, moreover, is still tied to the chief promoters of inflation in Britain, the trade unions. Even with the limitations that the Conservative government has put on their excesses, the unions have this year succeeded in various key industries in pushing up the cost of labor by several points over the rate of inflation, and thus set the old spiral of wages and prices in operation once more. Even though it is difficult to read Kinnock's thoughts on most things, his party is committed to releasing the trade unions from the laws that now control their conduct, so that the accession of a Labour government to office would almost inevitably lead to more industrial confrontation, more strikes, and more inflation. Many British voters at the next parliamentary election will be old enough to remember what things were like under Harold Wilson, so that even if the economy does not improve in the next two years, they must surely hesitate—if they worry about inflation, unemployment, the balance of trade, industrial unrest, and the rest of it—to vote for a party with a worse record than the Conservatives in all those fields.

The one factor that did most to assure the Labour party its success in the May elections was the Poll Tax. Mrs. Thatcher has said she intends to revise it, and there is obviously going to be a struggle in her cabinet over the type of revision that is to be adopted. It will not be easy to make this tax tolerable. There is no question of making it popular, for as Mrs. Thatcher herself has said, no tax is popular. Poll taxes have always been especially unpopular, as the example of the tax that preceded the Peasants' Revolt in England and the "capitation" that preceded the French Revolution are generally said to prove.

Why, then, did the Conservative government adopt it? We have to look back some time for an explanation. Ever since the early 1960s successive British governments have been trying to find an alternative to the traditional tax known as "rates" in financing local government. This, until its recent abolition, was a form of taxation imposed only on householders and owners of business premises, and was calculated on a theoretical rental value of the property. Already by 1960, these valuations had become so out of date that the "rates" yielded less than half the money needed to finance local govern-


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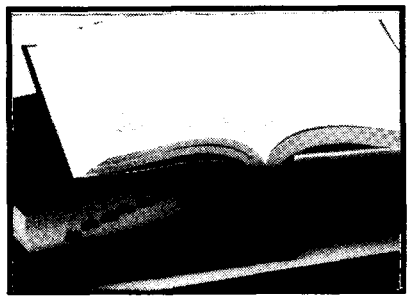

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ment; the remainder had to be provided by the central government from funds raised by national taxation.

As time went by, the rates yielded an ever smaller proportion, and the central government was called upon to contribute more and more. What made the situation worse was the peculiar structure of the British welfare state, which, like other welfare states, appears to generate as much waste as welfare. The structure was such—and for the most part still is—that the local governments controlled all the spending institutions in health, housing, education, social service, public libraries, sanitation, and so forth—while the central government had to find the greater share of the cost, a share that by 1989 had risen to 75 percent.

Since local governments had to fund only a quarter of what they spent, there was a temptation for them to spend extravagantly; and throughout the 1980s, even Conservative councillors, with their eyes on votes, were not always thrifty, while Labour councillors seemed to vie with each other in finding new outlets for profligate expenditure—lesbian leisure centers, black consciousness groups, graffiti painting classes were by no means the craziest objects on which public money was lavished by local councils while in Parliament the government was trying feverishly to cut back public expenditure to keep inflation down. Mrs. Thatcher reached the very sensible conclusion that if local councils wanted to spend money in foolish ways they should raise it locally, and be answerable to their own electors for what they spent.

What appeared the simplest way to achieve this purpose was to modernize the valuations of property, and so increase the "rates" to meet all local expenditure and not just a quarter of it. This method was tried in Scotland, and the result was an electoral disaster for the Conservative party in that kingdom. By "modernizing" rates the government found it had substantially increased the tax burden of householders and business people—the solid bourgeoisie to which Conservatives have traditionally looked for electoral support—while leaving everyone else untouched financially.

Mrs. Thatcher, seeing both the unfairness of the reforms and the harm they had done to the Conservative interest in Scotland, called for the rating system to be abolished altogether in favor of a totally new system of financing local government. Various ideas were mooted in commissions set up to formulate proposals. A local income tax, of the kind familiar enough in other countries, was considered, but rejected because it was thought to give too much power to local authorities who had already proved themselves to be irresponsible. The idea of a local sales tax was turned down because it was thought to conflict with European Economic Community regulations governing the Value Added Tax. The community charge, or Poll Tax, was finally chosen by the government for lack of a better alternative.

**In theory the Poll Tax sounds marvelous; but one might have expected a Conservative party to be suspicious of something that is theoretically sound but has no basis in history.**

Mrs. Thatcher is said to have favored it because it seemed more fair than the rates: it would force all the people who used the services provided by local authorities to pay for them, and it would subject those authorities who wasted public funds to the wrath of the voters whose money they squandered. It would have the further advantage of compelling the British people, who have failed in recent years to take much interest in local politics, to wake up to their duties as citizens and democrats.

In theory it sounds marvelous; but one might have expected a Conservative party to be suspicious of something that is theoretically sound but has no basis in history. The experience of local government reform by that very progressive Tory Edward Heath in the 1970s was less than fortunate. What Heath did was to amalgamate the smaller town and county authorities of the nation into larger units so that they could have more efficient management; the result was to abolish towns and counties with long histories and loyalties and institute political communities with strange new names like Clwyd and Avon, administered by a new class of high-paid bureaucrats and ruled by political enthusiasts lacking contact with ordinary voters, who often ceased to be aware of what local authority they had been attached to, and hence more apathetic than ever toward local government. These administrative monstrosities that Heath introduced have done more than anything else to sabotage Mrs. Thatcher's regime of thrift in public expenditure. She abolished one of them: Heath's Greater London Council; but the rest remain intact, and they are the ones charged with operating the Poll Tax.

In April of this year practically every Labour council set a high Poll Tax; a few Conservative councils set a very low Poll Tax, and many Conservative councils set a moderate to high tax. In the May elections those Conservative councils that set a very low Poll Tax increased their majorities; but elsewhere, Labour councils imposing a high Poll Tax did not lose as, in theory, they ought to have lost. This is largely because many voters, and notably those outside London, were persuaded that the central government of Mrs. Thatcher and not the local Labour council was responsible for their high tax bills.

This perception does not mean that the Poll Tax will continue to serve the electoral interests of Labour. By the date of the next general election the novelty will have worn off, voters in the country will catch up with those in London and become more aware of what their councils are spending, and revisions will probably have made the Poll Tax more equitable. As it stands, the system bears unduly on those who are neither rich nor poor. The Institute of Fiscal Studies has compared the Poll Tax charges with last year's rates in a sample of 7,000 households. The statistics show that among the top eight percent of households, there are mostly gainers. In the lowest income groups, people were found to benefit from tax exemptions. But among taxpayers in the middle range of incomes, losers were found to outnumber gainers by four to one, the average increase in local tax bills for them being some £200 a year.

This is not good for Mrs. Thatcher. The Conservative party does not prosper by making the rich richer, since they are usually Conservatives already; nor does it benefit much by alleviating the hardship of the very poor, who mostly vote Labour from habit. In England as in Scotland, the success of the Conservative party depends on the support of the middling sort of people. The problem the Conservative government has to solve before the demands for local taxation are sent out in the spring of 1991 is that of making the Poll Tax tolerable to the party's natural friends. It will undoubtedly try hard. After its success in London, the government is plainly not going to abandon the Poll Tax altogether, so it will have to concentrate on reforming it. Chris Patten, the minister responsible for local finance, has every reason to think up something good, since he has seen the council of his own constituency, Bath, pass out of Conservative control. I should expect him to succeed, and if he does so, Kinnock's chances of becoming the next British prime minister will be very much diminished.

There are other factors likely to undermine Kinnock's chances. Before the May elections, it looked as if the center parties had written themselves out of history, and that the next election would really be a two-horse race between Conservative and Labour. As it turned out, only the Social Democratic party of David Owen and the Greens were cut down to size, while the Liberal Democratic party made a remarkable comeback by capturing 18 percent of the vote, thus disproving the pollsters' predictions that it would capture only seven percent. If the Liberal Democratic party keeps up its momentum, Kinnock will be disappointed of his hopes of monopolizing the so-called anti-Thatcher vote. In a genuine three-party election, Mrs. Thatcher's chances of success are greater than those of Kinnock; this is because the strongholds of the Liberal-Democrats are constituencies with left-of-center traditions, which Labour can hold when there is no credible left-of-center alternative, but which Conservatives can win when the opposition vote is divided by two left-of-center parties.

Harold Wilson once said that a week is a long time in politics, and much more than a week has to pass before the next British general election. So while it is undoubtedly true that Kinnock would have won a 50-seat majority in Parliament if the local elections in May had been a general election, and if the people had voted on the party lines as they did, it does not follow that the people would vote the same way today, or that they will vote the same way in the summer of 1992. In 1986 the Conservatives lost more seats in local elections than they lost in those this year, and then went on to win a resounding victory in the 1987 general election. They may easily do so again. □



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Kenneth R. Timmerman

# SADDAM HUSSEIN'S COMPLAINT

The Rodney Dangerfield of Iraq hasn't exactly earned the world's respect, but no one is laughing at his new chemical warfare act.

Ruthless, strong-willed, determined, unforgiving: these are the adjectives that best describe the dictator who since 1968 has ruled Iraq with an iron fist. No one in his right mind could portray a man who has personally liquidated many of his political opponents as a lover of democratic process. For Saddam Hussein and his colleagues, an open democracy with an unbridled opposition is a weakness particular to the West. The Arabs—especially the unruly Iraqis—need discipline, they reason. And Saddam is best qualified to administer it.

But unlike many Third World leaders, Saddam Hussein is not in it for the money. As far as can be known, he has not made a habit of confusing the public purse with numbered bank accounts in Switzerland, and has severely punished government officials suspected of taking bribes. Driven by a powerful vision of Arab unity, he has also almost single-handedly lifted his country out of backwardness and tribalism and brought it into the modern world. Now, after eight years of war with Iran, he is turning all the resources of his oil-rich state toward one goal: forging the region's most powerful military machine, capable of deterring an Israeli attack and imposing Saddam as undisputed leader of the Arab world.

Although he is not a military man and harbors profound distrust for the professional soldiers on whom he must rely, Saddam Hussein has always been obsessed with military force and weaponry. This is because he sees them as the tools of power; and brute power, in its most raw, and often most cruel form, is what motivates this highly political animal. In the domestic arena, this has led to the creation of an extensive police and security apparatus, capable of reporting on the activities of ordinary citizens, the military, and even political allies, to quash revolt before it even begins. In the international arena, it has led to dangerous games: war with Iran, adventurism in Lebanon, and, most recently, Saddam's threat to "burn half of Israel" in retaliation for an eventual Israeli attack on Iraq's strategic weapons or production facilities.

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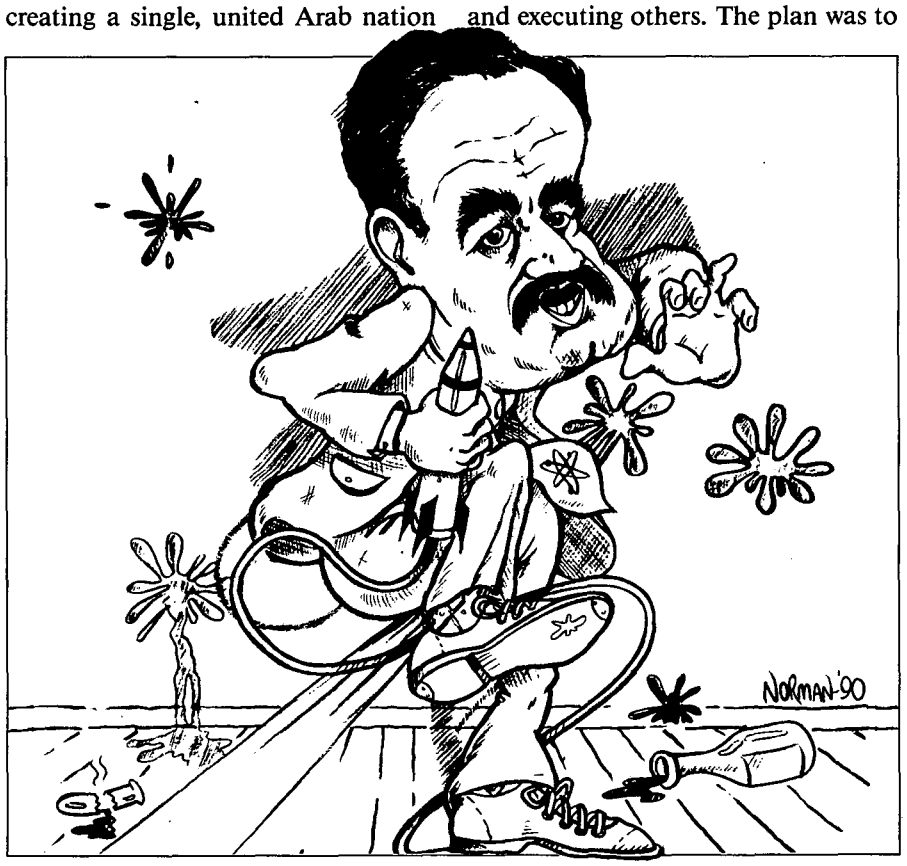
The man who has ruled Iraq for twenty-two years got his start in life as a political assassin, and he is proud of the fact. Born on April 28, 1937, in the village of Tikrit to the north of Baghdad, Saddam Hussein joined the newly formed Baath party in 1956, and committed his first political murder—the slaying of a policeman—two years later.

The Baath party, or the Party of Arab Renaissance, was committed to creating a single, united Arab nation stretching from North Africa to the Iranian border. Formed in 1947 as a response to Arab despair over the emergence of Israel, the Baathists are often lumped together with pan-Arabists such as the late Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. But the Iraqi branch of this international party, which Saddam Hussein would soon forge into a personal political tool, was vigorously anti-Communist and anti-Soviet. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Communists and Baathists frequently engaged in bloody street battles in cities and towns throughout Iraq. They remain bitter enemies today.

Following a brief stint in jail in 1958 for the police murder, Saddam Hussein was given a far more elevated task by his Baathist colleagues in October 1959: the assassination of Iraq's revolutionary (but pro-Soviet) leader, Abdel Karim Qassem. Qassem had already launched a nationwide purge against the Baathists, throwing many in jail and executing others. The plan was to lay an ambush on Baghdad's main thoroughfare, Rasheed Street, as Qassem drove through the narrow shopping district. Then the Baathists would seize power and purge the Communists in their turn.




According to Saddam's official biographer, Fouad Mater, the future Iraqi president was only supposed to cover the four-man hit team as they made their escape in a getaway car parked nearby, but he was "too enthusiastic to control himself" and opened fire with the others on Qassem's motorcade. Apparently none of the would-be assassins had trained sufficiently on their new machine guns to aim properly, since Qassem survived their combined fire. In the ensuing mêlée, Saddam was wounded in the left foot. That night, having managed to hobble to a safehouse in Baghdad, the future leader (legend has it) extracted the bullet himself with a knife. After a long, dangerous journey by foot and horseback to the Syrian border, the 22-year-old Saddam Hussein finally managed to flee the country.

In exile first in Damascus, later in Cairo, Saddam quickly climbed the ranks of the clandestine apparatus of the Baath party. He soon showed himself to be a genius for organization. When the Baathists briefly came to power in 1963, he assumed command of the party's military organization. Within months, however, the Baathists were ousted by a new dictator, Abdel Salim Aref. And over the next five years, before the Baathists successfully grabbed power on July 17, 1968, Saddam Hussein became the party's principal organizer, forging the Baath into a powerful, clandestine apparatus capable of staging a military coup and holding power thereafter. Working underground was a capital experience that would form the basis of his political method later on, leaving him with a strong taste for secrecy and an uncanny ability for spotting potential enemies and destroying them before they could



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mount a challenge to his power. The Baath retains its secretive cell structure to this day.

Only two weeks after seizing power in July 1968, Saddam pulled off a palace coup that would establish him as the regime's strongman, despite his nominal number two role. Having identified a clique of pro-Soviet army officers he suspected of seeking to destabilize the new regime, he cornered their chief, Colonel Razaq al-Nayef, and threatened to execute him on the spot if he didn't go into exile. The Colonel agreed to leave Iraq. But wary to the end, Saddam Hussein personally drove him to the airport and escorted him to the jet waiting to take him to Rabat, Morocco. "Just act normally," Saddam is reported to have hissed to his rival as they passed through the military checkpoints. "Don't forget: the pistol is inside my coat."

Twenty years later, Saddam Hussein would continue to eliminate his political rivals—sometimes, his opponents allege, even slaying them with his own hand. The lack of due process, the kangaroo courts used to try members of the Baath party accused of conspiring against the regime, and the reign of terror perpetuated by the ever-present *moukhtabarat* (security police) frequently figure in reports on human rights violations compiled by organizations such as Amnesty International. They also earned him the nickname featured in a recent *Newsweek* story: the Butcher of Baghdad.

In October 1983, Amnesty published a report on human rights violations in Iraq, which documented 520 cases of political executions between 1978 and 1981. Among those executed by order of a Revolutionary Court (permanent "special" courts for political offenses, established when the Baathists returned to power in 1968) were twenty-two members of the Baath party accused of taking part in a pro-Syrian conspiracy against the regime. Their trial, according to Amnesty, was held *in camera*, and the accused were not allowed to have lawyers or to appeal the sentence. The day after the six-day trial, the executions were carried out. In a detailed response to Amnesty's allegations, the Iraqi government called these executions "questions which involve the interior rules of the Party [and therefore] can not become the subject of discussion with your organization." As for the remainder of the 520 political executions detailed by Amnesty, the Iraqi government "asserts there has not been a single execution in Iraq for political motives. Besides, the figures quoted are exaggerated and imprecise."

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In April 1989, Amnesty published a special report solely devoted to the torture and execution of children in Iraq. One document named 315 children from the renegade Barzani clan in Iraqi Kurdistan who had been executed by the regime in 1983-84. A report presented by Amnesty to the United Nations on August 17, 1988, drew attention to widespread mass reprisals against Kurdish civilians in the north of the country, including the use of chemical weapons against entire villages, well before the infamous massacre at Halabja in March 1988. (Information recently leaked by the Pentagon to the *Washington Post* confirms that Iran must be held partly responsible for the Halabja massacre, a fact reported by specialized publications such as *Mednews* more than a year earlier. The proof hinges on the presence of cyanide gas among the victims. Iraq is not known to produce cyanide, whereas Iran does. The Pentagon leak was undoubtedly intended to convince Iraq that the Bush Administration does not intend to encourage the type of "Iraq bashing" now prevalent in certain quarters.)

In one of the cases reported by Amnesty, 300 Kurdish civilians were slaughtered in October 1985 in Suleimaniyah and Arbil, in northern Iraq, in reprisal for the murder of two army officers by Kurdish *peshmergas* opposed to the regime. In another case, between 100 and 200 Kurds were summarily executed in November 1987 in the village of Jiman. In mid-April 1987, Amnesty noted, 360 Kurds who had been gassed in an army attack on the village of Skeikh Wasanan were executed after they had sought medical assistance at a government hospital in Arbil. Another 400 Kurds are believed to have been executed in March 1988 when they too had sought help in Suleimaniyah, following gas attacks.

Iraqi leaders reject the Amnesty claims, and maintain that they have granted their Kurdish population more rights, including its own regional assembly and Kurdish universities, than any other country in the region. While this is true, it has not been without a price. And that price is total allegiance to the regime.

The Kurdish revolt was one of a palette of troubles that has plagued Saddam Hussein and his Baathist colleagues since they seized power in 1968. Lodged in the mountain fastnesses in the north of the country, Kurdish separatists violently disputed the central authority in Baghdad. They kidnapped foreign workers, and attacked army garrisons. Taking advantage of a fluid border with Iran, they received arms and aid from the Shah, the U.S., and Israel. For several years, the Kurds virtually controlled a third of the country, where much of Iraq's oil reserves lay. The military instrument the Baathists inherited from the previous regime was ill-disciplined and poorly equipped. To make matters worse, the army's primary supplier, the USSR, was bent on making the young Baathists pay for their gut-level anti-Communism (and, one might add, their earlier attempt to eliminate the Iraqi Communist party by force).

The result was an arms embargo in 1974-75 that nearly brought Saddam and the Baathists to their knees. As Saddam himself would put it later, the Soviets had so thoroughly cut off weapons and ammunition supplies that the army "had almost no more heavy artillery shells. Our air force had only three bombs left."

There was only one way out, and reluctantly, Saddam took it. On March 6, 1975, he met with the Shah of Iran in Algiers and signed the agreement that would later provide the *casus belli* for the Gulf War. At the time, he was convinced that the only way to put an end to the Kurdish revolt was to get Iran to cut off its support to the rebels. In exchange for the favor, the Shah demanded that Iraq cede partial sovereignty over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, making it the southern border between the two countries. It was a hard pill to swallow: the narrow Shatt-al-Arab was Iraq's sole outlet to the Gulf, and shared sovereignty meant Iran could block it at will. But as one of the diplomats who negotiated the deal told Christine Helms for her book *Iraq: Eastern Flank of the Arab World* (Brookings Institution, 1984): "It was either that or lose the north of the country." Within weeks of signing the Algiers Accord, the Kurdish rebellion collapsed for lack of arms.

The experience with the Soviet arms embargo taught Saddam Hussein a lesson he was not about to forget: depending on a sole source for arms supplies puts unacceptable limits on national sovereignty. From then on, he set out to diversify his arms purchases, buying extensively from France, Italy, Great Britain, Brazil, China, and a dozen other nations. No single supplier had the power to cut him off. Even the French, who supplied the backbone of a revamped air force (delivering 138 Mirage F-1 fighter-bombers from 1980-89, and every type of missile produced in France), could not influence their Iraqi client. In late 1986, upset by the mountain of unpaid Iraqi debt, the French attempted to pressure Baghdad by withholding delivery of the remaining twenty-four Mirage aircraft. For three years, the planes remained in cocoons in Bordeaux while the French Ministry of Finance negotiated with its Iraqi counterparts. In the end, it was the manufacturer, Dassault, who suffered the most. In the meantime, the Iraqis had purchased MiG 29s from the USSR (thus compromising an eventual follow-up Mirage 2000 sale for the French). And when Saddam finally signed the third debt rescheduling agreement with the French in October 1989, it was on his terms, not theirs.

As a self-styled Arab nationalist, Saddam Hussein feels it is his sacred duty to aid in the struggle to win back Arab territories occupied by Israel. At the very least, this means recovering the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem, taken by Israel in 1967. Eventually, it could mean all of Israel, "usurped" from the Arabs in 1948.

In the early days of his reign, Saddam Hussein believed Iraq could only achieve these goals by forging a pan-Arab union—preferably, a union led by Iraq. The most likely candidate was neighboring Syria, whose capital, Damascus, Iraq helped defend in 1973. Plans were soon drawn up to unify the two countries. After all, they were led by branches of the Arab Baath party, and complemented each other in many ways. Syria was poor but was on the front line with Israel, benefiting from a long Mediterranean coast; Iraq, virtually landlocked and more distant,



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was sitting atop a sea of oil. Both had long-standing military relationships with the USSR, but had managed to mark the limits of their dependence.

But personal rivalry between the two men—Saddam Hussein and Hafez al Assad—made the venture collapse. That rivalry had already emerged in 1978, when to Assad's regret Baghdad hosted the radical "Front of Refusal" Arab summit, which excommunicated Egypt from the Arab fold for having signed the Camp David peace with Israel. In 1979, it exploded. Assad came to Baghdad on June 16 for a three-day negotiating session, to put the finishing touches on the Treaty of Union between Syria and Iraq. In fact, negotiations were deadlocked over one item: who would preside over the new union. Assad insisted on taking the top slot for himself. Saddam refused.

Two weeks later, the Iraqi vice-president exposed a Syrian "plot" to compromise him. He had the conspirators arrested and put to death. On July 17, 1979, he officially assumed the presidency from his erstwhile colleague, Hassan Al Bakr. Union with Syria was out of the question. From now on, Iraq was on its own, with Saddam at the helm.

Eighteen months later, Syria would side with Iran in the Gulf War.

Iraq has always insisted it was Iran that started the Gulf War, through months of provocation, subversion, and outright hostilities. The provocation was carried directly into Iraq via Tehran Radio broadcasts in Arabic, which as early as January 1980 called for the overthrow of the secular Baathist regime. The subversion came that spring through Iranian support of the al-Dawa Islamic militants then gathering strength inside Iraq, and culminated in an assassination attempt against Deputy Premier (now Foreign Minister) Tarek Aziz while he was delivering a speech at Baghdad University. The hostilities were carried out at several "hot points" along the border between the two countries, where Iraqi settlements were bombed, shelled, and strafed by Iranian forces. Finally, by early September, Saddam had had enough. He unilaterally abrogated the Algiers Treaty and put his troops on alert. The Iranians replied by intensifying border skirmishes, with particularly violent incidents occurring on September 4. Even today, the Iraqis point to this date as the start of the war, and not September 22, when their troops crossed the international border.

While Saddam and the Iraqi diplomats charged with arguing the case may be technically right—there *was* Iranian provocation and it *was* significant—their reply (a full-scale military invasion) was incommensurate with the threat. Iran's armed forces were in no state to launch an offensive against Iraq, and the Revolutionary Guards had not yet been transformed into a fighting force. The real threat was political, subversive, not military. Khomeini's words were more deadly than his divisions.

As the war ground on, Iraq viewed mounting evidence of Israeli arms sales to Iran with a sense of *déjà vu.* Iraqi officials, and editorials in the state-controlled press, abounded with "I told you so" remarks. Iraq was being attacked by Israel and the United States via Iran, they said, because it was leading the Arab struggle for development. Israel could not tolerate the idea of Iraq becoming a modern, technologically advanced state. This is why it backed the Iranian war effort, and had launched a veritable international conspiracy to destroy Iraq.

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Saddam Hussein is using similar logic today when he excoriates the "British, American, and Zionist campaign" against Iraq's attempt to acquire embargoed high technology for its nuclear, chemical, and bacteriological weapons. For this is how he sees the recent sting operations by U.S. and British Customs which led to blocking a shipment of nuclear detonators and sections of a giant ballistic cannon bound for Iraq. "They act this way because they have realized the Arab nation is witnessing a resurgence and renaissance," Saddam Hussein said in an April 18 speech. It was all a Zionist conspiracy intended to prepare public opinion for an airstrike against Iraqi military installations, such as the one carried out in June 1981 by Israeli planes to destroy Iraq's "Osirak" nuclear reactor. "If anyone thinks he can achieve the welfare of his people and keep the Arabs barefooted, then he is mistaken," Saddam concluded.

In the same speech, delivered to the Central Council of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, Saddam acknowledged that Iraq had deployed ballistic missiles capable of reaching Israel, and specified that they were "directed west, not east; that is, in the direction of Israel." A few days earlier, he reiterated warnings to visiting U.S. Senator Robert Dole that Iraq would launch binary chemical weapons against Israel if attacked with nuclear bombs. "We have given instructions to the commanders of the air bases and the missile formations that once they hear Israel has hit any place in Iraq with the atomic bomb, they will load the chemical weapon with as much as will reach Israel and direct it at its territory." These were standing orders, he said, since the Iraqi High Command would probably be wiped out in the initial exchange. Iraqi commanders were therefore instructed to launch a retaliatory strike even "if they do not receive an order from a higher authority."

The Iraqi intention, which has been carefully and repeatedly explained through the press, is to *deter* an Israeli attack, not to provoke one. More than anything else, Iraq does not want to suffer the humiliation of another preemptive Israeli strike. Today its strategic weapons and military production facilities have been dispersed throughout the country. As Saddam himself put it, "In every civilian and military factory, a piece of the missile is made. Will [the Israelis] strike at every factory in Iraq, visible and invisible? They should hold their breath and think again."

Saddam's ambition is monumental. As he would have another biographer write, he intended to show the world that he alone was the guarantor of Arab dignity, the champion of Arab rebirth. He was, in short, the "Arab de Gaulle," who single-handedly had forged a disparate nation into a united, independent whole. It helped that the purveyor of this particular pretension was a Frenchman, Charles Saint-Prot. His glowing portrait of the Iraqi dictator published in February 1987 was distributed free of charge in Iraqi embassies throughout the world.

The sycophantic tone of Saint-Prot's portrait may fail to convince, but it does expose in stark colors what can only be called Saddam's complaint. This is the cross he bears through every trial, the humiliation he secretly nourishes after every slight in the press. Saddam's trouble is that no one takes him seriously. Not the West, not the Iranians, not the Soviets, not even the Arabs. The only ones who occasionally take him seriously are the Israelis, for obvious reasons. He is all bludgeon, and no finesse. It is his ultimate shortcoming, and he is sometimes smart enough to know it.

Let there be no mistake: Saddam Hussein is no Qaddafi. He is a blunt, calculating but astute politician. Even his blustering threats to launch binary chemical weapons against Israel were carefully couched in a framework resembling the "mutually assured destruction" theory that used to govern superpower relations. As he explained to Senator Dole and his colleagues, Iraq sought to develop chemical and biological weapons (at least partially) in response to Israel's nuclear arsenal. Saddam realizes full well the West has rejected this argument, and refuses to allow the issue of nuclear weapons to cloud discussions of chemical disarmament. But he insists, nevertheless, for such is his way. "If Israel realizes it will be struck," he told Senator Dole, "it might refrain from striking. If the West truly wants peace, [Iraq's] behavior is for the sake of peace."

For as long as Iraq remained a conventional military power of the third sort, such statements could be shrugged off as mildly amusing. In possession of a respectable strategic arsenal, however, as now appears the case, they become infinitely more disturbing. Does Saddam Hussein possess the maturity and the self-composure to pull back from Armageddon in times of stress? Does he have the stuff of which international statesmanship is made? Is he a potential negotiator in the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Without a strategic arsenal, the answer is clearly no. With it, answering these questions could become a matter of life or death for millions in the Middle East and beyond. Butcher of Baghdad, or Arab de Gaulle? So far, Saddam Hussein has shown he merits both epithets. But the day is coming when he—and History—may have to choose. □

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Edward Norden

# ISRAEL AND THE GREAT EXODUS

Soviet Jewry is giving Israel new life—but what kind of life will it be?

A witty rabbi once said that the Trotskys make the revolutions, and the Bronsteins pay the price.

In May, more than 10,000 fleeing Bronsteins arrived in the Jewish state. It won't be long, according to Israeli officials, before the monthly figure reaches 20,000. No one knows how many Soviet Jewish refugee-immigrants will finally come, in part because no one knows how many Jews there are in the teetering Russian empire—guesses range from 1.4 million to twice that. It's possible that in the next five to seven years, a tidal wave of 700,000 newcomers, mainly from the Soviet Union but also from Hungary, Argentina, Ethiopia, and South Africa, will hit Israel. Putting it in American terms, this means the equivalent of 42 million new citizens in less than a decade.

The stampede out of the Soviet Union is a spinoff of glasnost and perestroika. What used to be only thought or whispered by some Russian nationalists can now be shouted and published—that the Jews collectively are the cause of the country's woes, economic, political, social, and cultural. This self-pitying canard was born even before Trotsky-the-demon burst onto the scene. It has lived underground for generations, and now that free speech has been decreed, the old Jew-hatred is in the open. It's frightening.

To be sure, May 5, which is Marx's birthday and was unofficially heralded this year as Pogrom Day, passed non-violently. This did little to dampen the panic. Many Jews are taking the chance to get out to wherever they can, as quickly as they can. It's unlikely, though not impossible, that if and when pogroms break out, they'll be officially inspired. More likely, they'll be just one aspect of the chaos if perestroika fails, the Soviet Union collapses, and government of any kind becomes a memory.

The stampede is something of a race against time. There's no telling whether, if anarchy comes, the exits will stay open. Gorbachev was the one who opened them, he made visas available almost on demand, even though he explicitly acknowledged that a Jewish exodus would mean a brain drain for his backward country. He decided to let the Jews go nevertheless not because he was converted to Zionism, but because he hoped to win trade concessions from the U.S. by living up to basic human rights standards, of which freedom to emigrate is one. His successor could well have different ideas. That is also concentrating the minds of Soviet Jews.

The door to the U.S. having meanwhile been nearly shut by a new quota, they go to Israel, where the door is wide open—for a Zionist, what is being granted the Soviet Jews, what is taking place, is nothing more or less than repatriation. They're fleeing, but compared with Russians who have to stay behind, those Jews who have gotten out are privileged, the luckiest casualties of the simultaneous washout of Marxism-Leninism and Russian imperialism. Which of course makes the Russian anti-Semites even angrier.

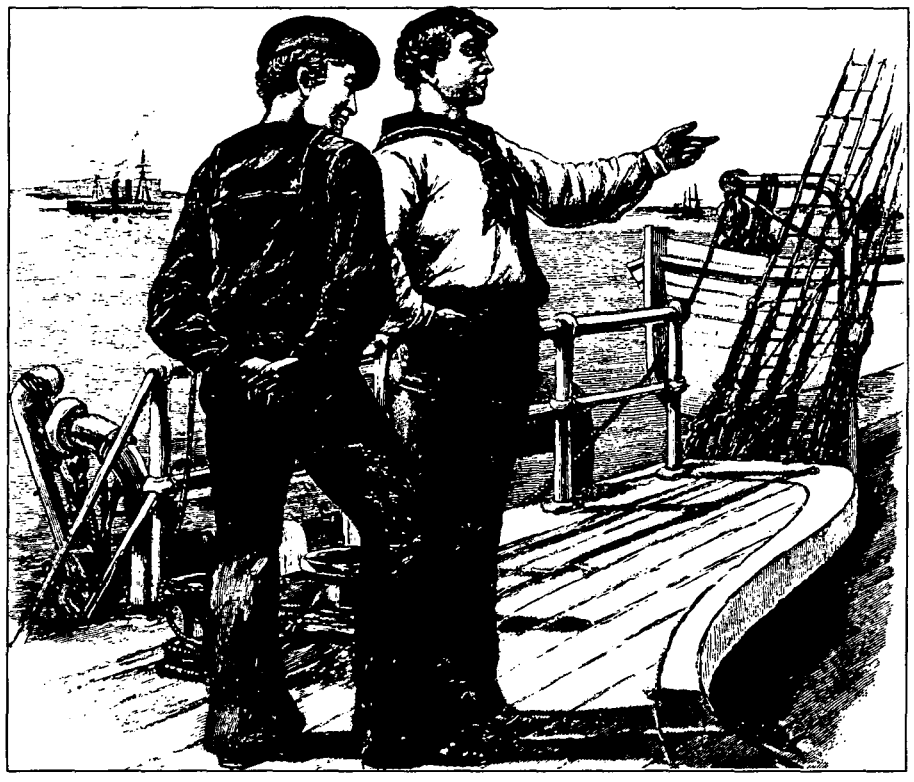
"Land of milk and honey," the smooth Kremlin spokesman, Gennady Gerasimov, calls Israel. It certainly is, especially in contrast to the land of empty shelves. Yet it's also a country beset by a Palestinian uprising, threats of poison gas from Iraq, an unemployment rate of almost 10 percent, a permanent political crisis, strikes, and 25 percent annual inflation. A great Soviet exodus at this time is, and isn't, exactly what the Jewish state needed. On the one hand, it demonstrates that the obituaries for Zionism were premature. On the other hand, it may swamp the so-called "absorption" apparatus.

Where are hundreds of thousands of newcomers to be housed? How will jobs for them be created? Generally, big waves of immigration have triggered boom times, but a wave this big hasn't been seen since Israel's first years, which were years of idealism, austerity, and rationing. The situation bears some comparison to that in West Germany when the Wall came down and the East Germans flocked over to be with their better-off brethren. No one has yet suggested that the door be shut—that would be the repeal of Zionism. But there is some grumbling and alarm undercutting the satisfaction of rescuing all these Jews, receiving all these reinforcements.

Blessing or curse? Israel is a tiny, not very well-off or efficiently run country, that is going to have a hard time integrating, much less turning to advantage, this windfall of trained brains and great genes—this year, for example, 1,000 Soviet Jewish physicists are expected. Such "material," as it is referred to, could be the country's salvation, but only with a lot of luck and intelligent planning on the part of a not exactly brilliant bureaucracy. Already, some of the immigrants who have been here long enough to catch their breaths have staged protests against the red tape. If things go badly, Ph.D.s from Moscow University who find themselves on the dole in Tel Aviv are liable to head for the U.S., quota or no quota.

Some Israelis—they tend to be leftists and doves who fear that the Soviet Jews will vote right-wing—hope in private that somehow the influx will turn out to be not so great. And in public, there is already talk across the political spectrum of declaring a state of emergency, bringing the army in to take over from the bureaucrats and setting up reception camps of pre-fabs, even tents. The incessant arrival of chartered jumbos from Budapest and Bucharest, soon from Warsaw and Helsinki, too, and maybe even straight from Moscow, probably makes such talk all too realistic.

Meanwhile, Israel remains very much a democracy. The Soviet Jews represent



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new voters, so almost all of the country's dozen parties, including the Communists, are earnestly wooing them. Only the two Arab parties are leaving them alone. The rush starts even before the flights land at Ben-Gurion airport. Unfazed by the absence of full diplomatic ties between Israel and the Soviet Union, many parties have opened branches in Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities, where tea, Hebrew lessons, and propaganda videos are available to the Israelis-to-be during the months they must anxiously wait before they can leave. Once in Israel, they are bombarded with everything from dinner invitations to offers of furniture by ward heelers.

It's fairly safe to predict that the Communists won't get much backing from the newcomers. The romance of Soviet Jews with Communism, which was a minority phenomenon even when it was hot, long ago burned out. Nor will the anti-Zionist, rabbinical parties in Israel appeal much to them. Though something of a religious revival has been noted among Soviet Jews of late, most are secular, not to say profoundly ignorant of all things Jewish—most of the men arrive uncircumcised. Between the two extremes of Communists and rabbis, however, all the other parties have a chance to win votes.

The question is whether any one party, or bloc of parties, will pick up the lion's share, breaking the deadlock between "doves" and "hawks," depriving the rabbinical parties of the balance of power, and either burying or breathing life into the so-called peace process in the Middle East.

"They're ours," a Likud backroomer said recently. His confidence is based on experience with an earlier, smaller exodus of Soviet Jews, which brought some 150,000 to Israel between 1969 and 1979. At exit polls during Knesset elections in those years, respondents weren't asked their country of origin. Nevertheless, it's the conventional wisdom that the majority of the previous Soviet immigrants voted for the Likud, and that it was in part thanks to their support that Menachem Begin was able to come in from the wilderness in 1977 and become prime minister.

The conventional wisdom fits well with impressionistic evidence gathered in the company of ex-Soviet Israelis. Furthermore, it stands to reason. A very high percentage of the Jews from the Soviet Union—especially those from the Baltic, Russian, and Ukrainian republics—are doctors, engineers, inventors, teachers, musicians, linguists. They constitute a class, a type. Were they Israeli-born, most would hold dovish views about the problem with the Arabs and vote for Labor and parties to its left. But their natural inclinations are smothered or corrected, at least temporarily and often forever, by what they learned in their previous lives, that is, by the socialism and anti-Semitism they knew in the Soviet Union.

The red flags at the Labor party's May Day parade in Tel Aviv evoked laughter at best and fear at worst among the new arrivals. It didn't matter that Labor has ditched almost all of its ideology, that the flags are vestigial—it rubbed the wrong way anyway. So did the dovish propaganda of some Laborites and many of those to Labor's left, decrying the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and plumping for talks with the PLO. All that smacked of the Brezhnev-era *Izvestia*. Though the left and center-left in Israel is where you find most, if by no means all, of the local academics, scientists, and bohemians, nevertheless the same sort of people who had come from the Soviet Union had good reason not to feel at home with the rhetoric and assumptions of their counterparts in Zion.

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To make things worse for itself, until 1977, and even for a while afterward until the political earthquake of that year which brought Begin and the right to the top sunk in, Labor behaved like the Establishment and either patronized or rejected most of those ex-Soviets who tried to join up. The Likud, however, the underdog party that lambasted socialism and all its bureaucratic works and exhibited no guilt about the occupation, welcomed the newcomers, as it did the Moroccans a decade before. The results were immediate and some have been long-lasting—today sixty-five ex-Soviets sit on the Likud's central committee, to only twenty-five on Labor's. The Likud is counting on the current, potentially much bigger wave of Soviets to do as its predecessor did. According to this scenario, every jumbo that lands improves the Likud's odds to form a government without Labor after the next general elections, which may be called soon.

Labor hasn't written the newcomers off. Prof. Mikhail Agursky, a Moscow-born Sovietologist who arrived in 1975 and managed to become a Laborite soon after, says that the support of these latest arrivals is up for grabs. For one thing, he says, they're not Zionists like those who came in 1969-79. They're refugees—most would be going to Brooklyn if the U.S. hadn't imposed a quota. The only things they have to declare in their ideological baggage are a loathing for socialism and a rather idealized love of its opposite, which they believe prevails everywhere in the West, of which Israel is a part. Motivated much more by fear and a desire for the good, safe life than by Jewish nationalism, they'll be less susceptible to the Likud and more open to Labor, which advertises itself as the party of peace. So hopes Agursky, a Zionist himself.

Besides, Labor has mended some of its ways. It long ago expunged "socialism" from its vocabulary, and the first ex-Soviet member of the Knesset is a Laborite, the Georgian-born Ephraim Gur. Today's refugees may finally be influenced most by the views of the Soviet Jews who came in the seventies, a good many of whom by now have become acclimated, put their previous lives and experiences in perspective, and spread out across the spectrum. The trouble for Labor is that as they became more knowledgeable about the not-very-edifying workings of Israeli democracy, those ex-Soviets who abandoned the Likud in the eighties were probably as likely to move farther to the right as they were to switch to Labor. You often hear Hebrew spoken with a juicy Russian accent by activists for parties whose ideas about the Arabs make the Likud's sound conciliatory.

Things are fluid. Everyone is hopeful, everyone is watching his back. Likud and Labor are both keeping a wary eye on Natan (Anatoli) Sharansky, the celebrated Zionist who spent years in the Gulag and was released to come to Israel in 1986. Both big parties have courted him in vain. He's probably the most popular figure among the ex-Soviets, and probably could deliver a couple of added Knesset seats to the party he blessed—enough to enable it to make the next government. Alternatively, he could field a list of his own. He already heads something called Zionist Forum, a nonpolitical pressure group seeking to cut red tape in the immigration and absorption process. Rumors circulate that Zionist Forum will go political. But it probably won't, Sharansky obviously being aware that as things stand, it's easier to keep your integrity in the Gulag than the Knesset.

Meanwhile, the jumbos touch down, and if another "national unity" government doesn't emerge from the current political torture, there will probably be early elections.

Labor's campaign heading into an election will stress the opportunity to compromise with the Palestinians and the folly of defying the world by spurning that chance. Benefits will be foreseen even before peace is made. Why, for example, not do everything possible to free up money being budgeted for the army, and for containing the *intifada*, and use it instead to absorb the immigration, an immigration apt to grow even larger if Israel unbends? Shimon Peres, for the time being still head of the Labor party, has already said that as soon as Israel gets on track and accepts U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's ideas for talks, the USSR will renew full diplomatic relations, direct flights from Moscow will double or triple the number of Soviet Jews arriving, the *intifada* will halt, and American aid will actually increase. Indeed, in what might be collusion, the State Department and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze have also let it be understood that if Israel relaxes its conditions for meeting the Palestinians (read the PLO) and pledges not to settle Soviet Jews in the occupied territories, it would become possible to honor the El Al–Aeroflot agreement on a direct Moscow-Tel Aviv route.

This is the agreement that the Arab League persuaded the Kremlin to put on ice following Yitzhak Shamir's remark last January about a big immigration necessitating a big Israel. Right-wing Zionists are especially tempted by such an airlift. An expanded, accelerated exodus coupled with the start of talks would, for opposite reasons, be both their and Arafat's dream and nightmare combined. The deal would also appeal to the Soviet newcomers in Israel. They have scant attachment to or interest in the occupied territories. Fewer than a thousand so far have chosen to go to the West Bank. But many do have family and friends back in the USSR sitting on their own suitcases as the rumors of imminent pogrom multiply. Labor, which is in sad shape after failing to form a government, might have success too in selling itself, both to veteran Israelis and to greenhorns voting for the first time, as the peace party. Ex-Soviet Jews who'd rather have gone to the States aren't eager to get into uniform and help suppress the *intifada*, as the boys and men among them up to the age of fifty-two will have to do. And it isn't any relief to be in-



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structed in the use of gas masks.

The Likud will riposte that those who sound dovish notes aren't necessarily the ones best suited to make peace with the Arabs. After all, the peace treaty with Egypt was signed by Menachem Begin. The path to more such breakthroughs is blocked, according to this argument, only so long as the men ruling the Arabs can believe that they have more to gain, and less to lose, by threatening war than making peace. To be sure, the Likud is riven at least as seriously as Labor is by tactical disputes and personal feuds. But when voting time comes its hard-nosed outlook on negotiations has so far always made more sense to more Israeli Jews. Certainly, if in the next elections the conventional wisdom is borne out, and the majority of the new voters from the USSR help to return the Likud to power, this of itself won't mean that the "peace process" is doomed.

The great exodus is a rabbit that history has pulled out of its hat. From being a country where the majority of Jews have grandfathers born in Moslem countries, Israel is about to become a place where European backgrounds are more common. If it can hold on to most of the newcomers and their children, make good use of them and let them contribute, it will become a stronger, more secure, less nervous country. Other things may change too, but Israel's brand of democratic politics isn't necessarily going to be one of them. No one is betting that there is going to be an electoral reform soon to curb the small parties. Nor can the arrival of hosts of Soviet Jews be expected to answer the eternal questions behind the nonstop political uncertainty: In what ways should the Jewish state be Jewish? And how should peace with the Arabs be pursued? □

Algis Valiunas

# HOMAGE TO LITHUANIA

As the small country pursues its dream, Moscow reminds the West it is not in the business of making dreams come true.

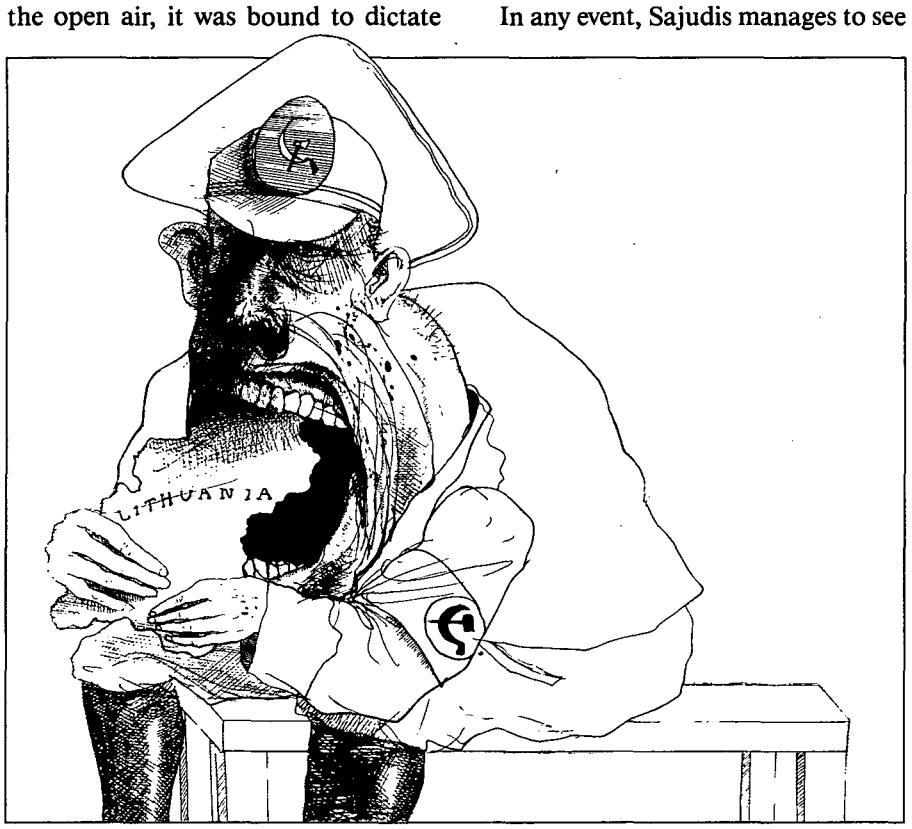
## I

Since it became possible for Lithuanians to think of freedom, it has been impossible for them not to. For the past two years, every one of them has thought of it every day. Before then, of course, there were heroic men and women who knew their souls to be free and who therefore possessed the courage to call their rulers tyrants and their country a prison, with little regard for the personal consequences but without any real hope of changing the regime. And one suspects there were countless people who dreamed of freedom as a man must do who has spent most of his life in jail, and who knows he is going to spend the rest there as well: caressing a treasured recollection that he brings out in time of particular need and then locks away, fingering a hope that he never permits himself to cultivate into anything more than a momentary idyll, for fear of rousing himself to desperation.

Now the Lithuanians are roused all right, but they are determined rather than desperate. The determination that allowed them to endure an evil regime when there was nothing to do but endure now gives them the daring to try to throw off that regime the moment such a thing seems possible. The current hope of the Lithuanians is that of a people who have foresworn false hope through the previous fifty years: in declaring their independence on March 11, they acted as suddenly, as boldly, as decisively as they did because the nearer they came to true freedom, the more they despised the comparative ease their jailers were allowing them, and the more they needed the one thing they had all yearned for all along. Lithuania could not wait any longer than it did: to hang back in silence until Moscow assured it that it could now ask for independence would have been to admit that its captivity had been just. Once the hope of freedom was released into the open air, it was bound to dictate the course of events, and their pace.

The founding of the Lithuanian Reform Movement (*reform* is the translation of the Lithuanian *persitvarkimas*, which is the translation of *perestroika*) by some 500 intellectuals in June 1988, under the motto "Openness, democracy, sovereignty," was the catalytic event. Generally known now as *Sajudis*, or *movement* plain and simple, this organization is the predominant political force in Lithuania, although the Red Army of course does claim a certain primacy of its own.

In any event, Sajudis manages to see to most everything the Red Army does not have time for. The current Sajudis directory lists fifty-one local branches, in this country of 3.7 million; twenty-seven affiliated publications; ecological, legal, and cultural commissions; committees for Catholic hospitals, aid to political prisoners, and the Lithuanian Olympic team; clubs for writers and for those back from deportation; fourteen youth organizations and four for women; political parties (the Lithuanian Democratic party, the Humanist and Progress party, the Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats, and the Greens); doctors', engineers', computer programmers', farmers', workers', and choir-masters' unions or professional societies; and societies for Lithuanian minorities, including Armenians, Byelorussians, Estonians, Georgians, Jews, Karaims, Latvians, Poles, Rumanian-Moldavians, Russians, Tartars, and Ukrainians.




The Red Army goes unmentioned in the Sajudis directory. Nor does the Red Army have a similar directory of its own, if only because it would have a hard time coming up with a similar list of friends in Lithuania. But then the Red Army doesn't need friends: it just needs enemies who are so tired of being enemies they'd do almost anything to become friends; and it is especially fortunate to have precisely such enemies in Washington these days.

The Lithuanians have been less agreeable enemies to the Soviets

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than the Americans have; you are more inclined to appreciate your enemy's fine qualities and to overlook his unpleasant ones when he has his knee on someone else's throat than when he has it on your own. Inspired by Sajudis's daring, the Lithuanian people have seized upon the opportunity that Gorbachev's reforms have given them, not in order to enjoy the blessings that life in a reconstituted Soviet Union will bring, but rather to bolt the union they never wanted any part of. Within two weeks of voting itself into existence, Sajudis had its first audience with the secretary of the Lithuanian Communist party (LCP), and began its career as the opposition.

A week after that, a Sajudis meeting in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, drew 30,000 people. Five days later demonstrators protested against distorted press coverage, and demanded freedom of the press. A couple of months down the line, the *Sajudis News* published the complete texts of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols, in which Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union settled the fate of the Baltic republics and Rumania; the Soviet Union continued to deny that any secret treaty had ever existed. To commemorate, in angry mourning, the signing of the pact, 250,000 people turned out in Vilnius, 50,000 in Kaunas, and thousands more in smaller cities. Ten days later 100,000 Lithuanians joined hands with 50,000 Latvians and 15,000 Estonians along the Baltic shore in order to protest the sea's ruinous pollution. In mid-September Sajudis sponsored another environmental protest, this one at the site of a Chernobyl-type nuclear power plant, which was notorious for leaks and minor accidents; the Republic's leadership became very cross with Sajudis for this antagonism.

Shortly afterward, Petras Cidzikas began a hunger strike in the Vilnius Cathedral to free political prisoners; it was to last thirty-two days—and for much of the time Cidzikas was to lie cruciform on the floor, praying or meditating—until the party bosses agreed to let some of their captives go. Two thousand people turned out to express their gratitude to the faster. While Cidzikas was fasting, the nation celebrated the raising of the Lithuanian flag atop the Castle of Gediminas, the medieval hilltop stronghold that overlooks Vilnius. The crowd, naturally, ran to six figures, and the carousing was rumbustious even by Eastern European anti-Communist fiesta standards; the Communist leadership, both from fear of the crowd, and from the desire to ingratiate itself, announced that it was taking steps to make Lithuanian the official language of Lithuania. On November 1, Lithuanians celebrated All Souls' Day for the first time since the Second World War. The Mass in the Vilnius Cathedral was broadcast nationwide, and 20,000 gathered at the grave of Jonas Basanavicius, who drafted the Declaration of Independence in 1918. So much for the first five months of the Movement.

## II

There has been no slackening in the pace since then; quite the contrary. In January 1989 a rally of 50,000 people, sponsored by the Lithuanian Liberty League, the Democratic party, Young Lithuania, and the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, demanded outright independence. Youths refused induction into the Red Army; eighteen Lithuanian recruits had been murdered or had committed suicide the previous year, persecuted for their nation's call to freedom, which Soviet patriots understood to be a recrudescence of fascism. On February 16, Lithuania's Independence Day, Cardinal Sladkevicius, at large after twenty-five years of house arrest, invoked the spirit of Gandhi as a moral preceptor for the Lithuanian movement. Three Lithuanian yachts crossed the Atlantic in memory of the air crossing by Darius and Girenas in 1933. Twenty thousand attended a meeting at which former political prisoners and exiles spoke; a chapel was dedicated to the nation's exiles in the Vilnius Cathedral. The Freedom Monument that was erected in Kaunas replaced the one the Soviets had knocked down after the war. The three crosses that were erected atop the highest hill in Vilnius replaced the ones the Soviets had knocked down after the war. A million Lithuanians were among the two million Balts who took part in the Baltic Way, joining hands to form a human chain between Vilnius and Tallinn, Estonia; the stunning scale of this exhibition of moral force illustrated, as perhaps nothing else short of mass death can do, the enormity of the injustice that the Soviet Union has committed against these nations. Three Lithuanian cities hosted a scholarly conference on theology and church music. The artists' union declared its independence from Moscow; a while later, so did the cinematographers' union; a while later still, so did the Lithuanian Communist party, led by Algirdas Brazauskas. Brazauskas himself soon called for Lithuanian independence. People rallied to support democracy in Rumania. Lithuanians legally celebrated Christmas for the second time since the war.

Two days before Christmas, and overly excited perhaps—*Time* had just named him its "Man of the Decade"—Gorbachev had promised that any attempt to secede from the Soviet Union would end in "discord, bloodshed, and death." He thought he'd do well to come to Lithuania and talk the folks there out of the gruesome way they had chosen. The first Soviet premier ever to go and actually have a look at Lithuania, he breezed into Vilnius like a tenor with a throat of gold, who has spent his life singing for the world's most demanding audiences, and who knows that when he is done, there is never a dry eye in the house, or a dry seat. Condescending to play the provinces now, and strictly for their sake, he expected to knock the yokels over just by flashing the metal in his teeth; instead, the crowd sent him back to practice his scales. A factory worker told him the Russians were imperial exploiters; Gorbachev yipped in pain at the accusation, and retorted that the Russians "share everything." Gorbachev pleaded the security interests of the Russian people, who required access to the Baltic; someone suggested the Soviet Union sign a treaty with a free Lithuania. Displaying a Neapolitan vehemence of gesture, he cajoled, hectored, and scoffed at his interlocutors.

**The Red Army doesn't need friends: it just needs enemies who are so tired of being enemies they'd do almost anything to become friends; and it is especially fortunate to have precisely such enemies in Washington these days.**

The most dramatic confrontation—which one did not read of in the American press—came when a woman in the street demanded an end to the conscription of Lithuanian men into the Red Army: she told him about her own son, who killed himself after returning home from the army, where a group of his colleagues had castrated him for the crime of being a Lithuanian. Gorbachev appeared insulted to be told of such a thing. Miffed by the unappreciative reception, he turned brusque, huffy, with these upstart colonials. He saw he would not be able to count on them. They'd known all along they couldn't count on him.

Nevertheless, he did have his Lithuanian supporters who could not imagine life without him. "Confrontation? No, dialogue," read a campaign poster of the Lithuanian Communist party that I saw in Vilnius last February; it showed Gorbachev venturing deep into an oceanic crowd that didn't appear thrilled to see him. One thought of Pharaoh in hot pursuit of the Israelites, just before the waters resumed their customary position, but one was sobered by the thought that nowadays it's Pharaoh who has the insuperable advantage in technology. The slogan on the poster did not just describe, and fulsomely enough, what Gorbachev had done; it also warned what he could do. Whatever appeal the LCP campaign posters might have had—it turned out not to be much—implicitly rested upon the one undeniable pharaonic edge: that the Red Army could still come crashing down on this small place like the Red Sea at full throttle. Having dramatically broken with Moscow the previous November, the LCP turned around and tried to use the fear of Moscow as its essential campaigning device: better a *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Gorbachev than with Mr. Kalashnikov.

Algirdas Brazauskas, then president of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, advocated independence, but foresaw so daunting an array of trials to pass through beforehand that it was all but impossible to envision this feckless little country ever actually becoming worthy of nationhood. "Independence must be based on political, economic, and moral preconditions, but as yet I can't say we have achieved these preconditions." The preconditions Brazauskas spoke of were those that Moscow had imposed. A man whom most of his countrymen thought of as a true patriot, Brazauskas nevertheless had acquired the habit of checking the accuracy of his own view of things by looking through Soviet eyes. It was Gorbachev's case that Brazauskas's party presented to the Lithuanian people, and they had better things in mind.

Within Sajudis, too, there was a faction, including some Communists, inclined to foot-dragging, and another built for speed. The champion of the speed-merchants was Kazimieras Motieka, a lawyer who was a member of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Long-faced, with a prosecutorial gravity about him, he nevertheless shows in his face and carriage and rapid eloquence a relish for the vivid glamour of politics at its most thrilling upper reaches: moral seriousness without compromise combines in him with obvious pleasure at doing work that is the focus of his countrymen's passion. Those who dif-



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fer with him think of him as a hothead. He was celebrated for his repeated attacks on Brazauskas, who relentlessly warned that Lithuania not get ahead of itself: "We want to get out of this accursed union, and [the LCP] wants to keep us in." Shortly before Independence Day, Motieka lit into Brazauskas for the disparity between remarks he had made in Lithuanian about the Red Army and those he'd made in Russian: in Lithuanian he'd called it "one of the forces that would decide Lithuania's future," while in Russian he'd said it was "the one force." Brazauskas answered that, in Moscow, he'd made the remark without referring to notes, and in a foreign language; Motieka observed that he'd made the remark eight times.

Punctilious rectitude in league with the refusal to be intimidated, however fearsome the threat, does set a man apart, or a nation; and Motieka represents the Lithuanian nation at its quixotic but perfectly reasonable best. When Moscow began constricting the flow of needed products to Lithuania —Lithuanians were speaking in February about economic blockade, and it was only the West that was shocked when the Soviets cut off the oil supply —Motieka blithely pointed out that this proved them guilty of the very thing they were accusing the Lithuanians of trying to do. The Russians persisted in the fantasy that a free Lithuania would stop trading with them, while in fact Lithuanians had every intention of continuing economic relations—but as one nation freely trafficking with another, not as a colonial outpost serving the imperial need.

Motieka's aggressiveness has made him enemies in Sajudis, or determined opponents anyhow. The boldness that marked him as a leader effectively disqualified him from presiding over the leadership of the organization. The sort of man Sajudis needed for its president was one who would tame the potentially anarchic disputatiousness of a political organization that professed to have one aim but whose members disagreed endlessly about the ways

to reach it. Vytautas Landsbergis, who was president of Sajudis and is now president of Lithuania, looks like the sort of man it would be all but impossible to throw a punch at, even in the throes of parliamentary procedure. Plumpish, bespectacled, fifty-nine years old but looking forty-five, with a nervous hissing laugh, he is demonstratively unoffensive, unless the subject is the perfidy of the Soviet Union, or the indifference of the West. Sajudis members admired him as a master of compromise, piecing together agreements between rival factions when they wanted most to leave each other in pieces. On February 15, when the LCP was conducting festivities on the eve of Independence Day, Motieka approached Landsbergis to suggest that Sajudis boycott the proceedings, or at the very least agree to walk out if they should turn distasteful. Landsbergis coolly replied that Brazauskas "was not as bad as that," and that he didn't want Sajudis "to turn this into a circus." Motieka retorted that it was the LCP that was likely to turn it into a circus; but his fierce attack dwindled into a pro forma protest. Mannerly agreeableness won out, prudently.

This prudence of Landsbergis's—a word we hear more and more, lately—should not mark him as a timid or too easily agreeable man. Landsbergis is a man of prudence in the fullest sense, capable of such daring or such circumspection as the times demand. A Sajudis member who preferred Motieka could find no fault with Landsbergis's courage, nevertheless: when the police had cornered a group of students at an early Sajudis demonstration and were moving in with clubs drawn, it was Landsbergis who had charged to the youths' rescue. Perhaps he is the sort of man the very goons cannot bring themselves to throw a punch at, even in the throes of conscienceless state-sponsored violence. At any rate, when the nation called for boldness, there was no professorial diffidence about him.

**When the police had cornered a group of students at an early Sajudis demonstration and were moving in with clubs drawn, it was Landsbergis who had charged to the youths' rescue.**

## III

To the eyes of some Lithuanian patriots, however, the adjustments that Landsbergis and Sajudis made to political circumstances proved them inadequate to lead Lithuania out of those circumstances. There was a highly principled disagreement between Victor Petkus, the head of the Lithuanian Freedom League, which includes the Christian Democratic Union, and the Sajudis leadership. In Petkus's view, political leadership had to be moral leadership of irreproachable integrity: the Lithuanian resistance must refuse any compromise with the occupying power, or with its local Communist minions. However circumstances might shift, they would always require the unswerving pursuit of the one true course.

Petkus has a peerless résumé as man of conscience. The leading figure in the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, he served hard time for his activities with this "kamikaze band"—he was Anatoly Shcharansky's cellmate for a while—to bring his total confinement to some twenty-four years. A man of sixty, he has an air of contemplative serenity that is broken occasionally by a terse bitterness, though not at his personal suffering, which he did not care to discuss. Petkus has a certain resemblance to the British character actor Robert Morley, most especially to Robert Morley's silhouette: Petkus is imposingly portly. Someone said Petkus had once observed that, having gone hungry for twenty years, he had no intention of missing another meal.

So long as the Red Army remained in Lithuania, Petkus asserted, there was no reason to expect that parliamentary activity was going to win the nation its freedom. He faulted Sajudis for sacrificing moral clarity, and the force that it bestows, for the sake of political expediency, which was so dimly conceived it wasn't likely anything much was going to get expedited. The previous May Sajudis had opposed a petition, supported by the Freedom League among others, that the Red Army be withdrawn; Sajudis had thought the action provocative, precipitant. By July Sajudis was out gathering signatures; some 1.6 million Lithuanians wound up signing. In the upcoming elections, he pointed out, Sajudis was endorsing thirty-one Communist party members, while the Communist party was not endorsing any non-Communists from Sajudis. Any association with the Communists, however patriotic they might declare themselves, Petkus found repugnant. Even Motieka, who seemed to be a natural ally, Petkus faulted for his sometime membership in the party: "I want to believe he's a good man. But there's a but. Why did he join the party?"

Petkus gave little thanks for the degree of freedom that Lithuania already had. The only real difference between Lithuania today and Lithuania three years ago was that the use of terror had nearly been eliminated. Nevertheless, it was a difficult habit to kick: he showed me a note he had received describing the recent police attack on a small political meeting in a private apartment. "The beatings went on for half an hour," he remarked in a dead tone. Petkus warned that there could be a revival of full-scale terror soon enough: the Red Army was building prison camps in Lithuania, so that it should not be caught unprepared if Gorbachev were to fall. Yet Petkus placed no confidence in Gorbachev: "An individual like Gorbachev matters very little."

Petkus's favored political approach is dramatic action that epitomizes unconquerable moral will, and he was convinced that, had the Lithuanian people risen up as one, peacefully but irrepressibly, at the same time the Czechs and the East Germans had done, Lithuania would have won its freedom already. "Sajudis let the moment go," and now all Sajudis was doing was getting ready "to take over the administration of the occupation."

Although few Lithuanians shared Petkus's view that Sajudis had failed the country, all of them knew that what Sajudis had helped Lithuania get—the right endlessly to speak of and to write of and to demonstrate for independence, and even freely to vote for a government that would advocate independence—was not independence.

When Lithuania observed the anniversary of its independence on February 16, one of the speakers at the rally in Vilnius called it "a celebration, but through tears." Although Lithuania declared that independence in 1918, the time it has actually been allowed to enjoy it has been achingly brief: from 1919 to 1940, first as a democratic republic until 1926, then as a dictatorship of the right—though a comparatively benign one, for those years, in those parts—until the Soviets, then the Nazis, then once again the Soviets occupied Lithuania during World War II. Last year the Soviet Union permitted Lithuania to celebrate its Independence Day for the first time since the war, and this year Lithuania marked the occasion with large public gatherings throughout the country; in every last town and village, it seemed that a new monument went up and most everyone



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turned out to see it and to show his children.

The centerpiece of the celebration was the unveiling in Kaunas, a city of some 450,000, and Lithuania's second largest, of a monument to those who've died fighting for Lithuania's freedom; the monument was made of fieldstones that volunteers had hauled from the major battlefields of Lithuanian history. The speakers were numerous—almost everyone from the crowd who asked to speak was invited to do so—and the remarks tended to the *dulce et decorum est* vein: sonorous, poignant, perhaps rather long on wind and platitude, and emphasizing the united front that Lithuanians of various ethnic origins and political opinions have presented to invaders from East and West alike down the centuries.

The solemnity of the occasion was by no means forbidding: the atmosphere was one of genial elevation, and not without a touch of humor around the edges. Some slight eruptions of irreverence suggested that people do have it in them to get a bit bored sometimes with these grand occasions of state. They must be eager to reach the ends to which the hallowed gathering and the grave declamation are but the means: wilting under the oratorical barrage at Kaunas, a young woman asked me, "When they do this kind of thing in Chicago, do they blabber on as long as this?"

In Vilnius that night, on the balcony outside the Sajudis office, a young man who worked there was impersonating a revolutionary desperado and inciting the dispersing crowd to riot—much too quietly for anyone in the street to hear, but loudly enough to amuse the girl he was trying to impress: "My friends and countrymen! Take up your guns. Go out and blast some windows." When the crowd had gone, he dispersed the audience too: "All right. Show's over." Not everyone wanted to watch that particular show every minute anyway. A few days later Lithuanian television offered a national theater production of Strindberg's *The Father* especially "for those who are tired of politics."

Perhaps the finest moment of the celebration in Kaunas came when the master of ceremonies, between speeches, tenderly held up a small child who'd gotten lost in the huge crowd. There was a ripple of laughter, and no one seemed to feel the national dignity had been affronted. If anything, it had been upheld, by this touch of neighborly kindness.

This lovely unaffected ease of affection was the product of democratic manners, which subordinate ceremony to natural sentiment. You might expect to see simple graciousness like this at a Wisconsin county fair, or the mayoral inauguration in a small Nebraska town. Although this kind of glorious openhandedness we like to think of as peculiarly American, in this case it probably had a peculiarly Lithuanian derivation: from a tradition of Christian humility deeply graven, and from the closeness that years of shared suffering have given this people. However, there is plenty in Lithuania that bears a Western imprint, in manners, morals, and thought.

## IV

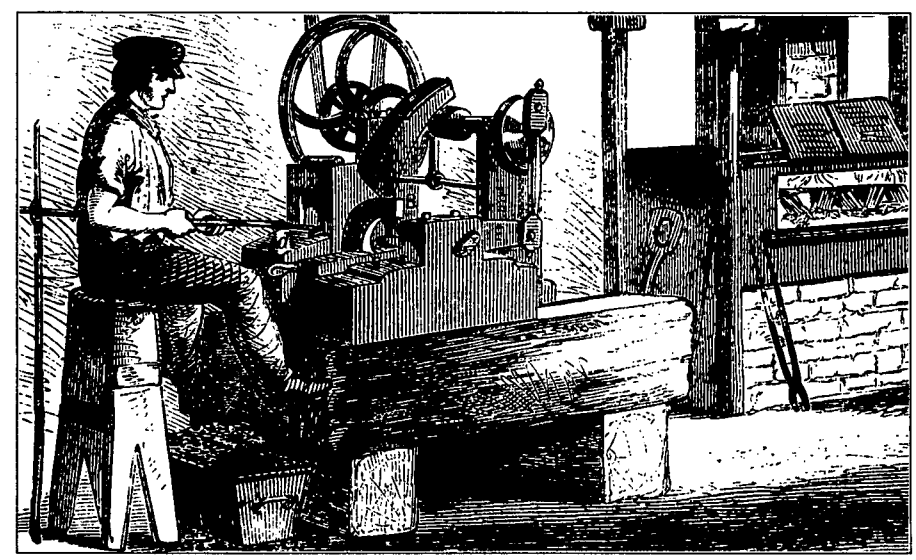
Twelve years ago, when I first visited Vilnius, women on the street tended to favor the *babushka*-with-birch-broom look that the imperial capital had authorized as ideologically sound proletarian daywear. A whiff of freedom, a touch of prosperity (with Estonia, Lithuania has the highest standard of living in the USSR), and bingo: nobody walks around looking like Mrs. Brezhnev anymore. Vilnius is a city of superbly good-looking women—the only other places where I've seen knockout beauties in comparable concentrations are Florence, Westwood, and Park Avenue between 46th and 59th Streets—and no one deserves more than they to be arrayed in the finest leather, silk, and fur. Of course, they are not yet, and will not be for some time; but the signs of aspiration to Western standards of elegance are unmistakable. On the flight from Moscow to Vilnius, a Lithuanian mother sitting just in front of me proudly pulled a large and vivid Revlon advertisement from her purse and showed it to her teenage daughter, who studied it with evident wonder and yearning. When the daughter was finished—it took a while—the mother put the ad back away again, with care. People do want these things. Comforts and adornments are not the whole story, but they are part of the deal.

Amusement too is very much part of the democratic deal; sport is a perennial American growth industry. For some time Lithuania has had a remarkable passion for an American sport—basketball—but political passion has made it more than an amusement. Since a bunch of Lithuanian-American ringers—including Ed Krauciunas from Chicago, who under the name of Moose Krause later became athletic director at Notre Dame—helped Lithuania to the European championship in 1937 and 1939, basketball has been a serious game there. The rolling countryside between Vilnius and Kaunas looks rather like a pinier version of southern Indiana, and the backboard and rim that you spot in every small town indicates that this knob or hollow too has been smitten with Hoosier mania. In the wilds of Indiana, however, most every garage or barn has its own basket, while in Lithuania the public court, hardscrabble and hangdog, appears to be the only game in town.

So they learn the city game, in these Baltic hamlets; and the best that Lithuania turns out can play with the best anywhere. Three of the starters for the Soviet Olympic team were Lithuanian, and one more besides played regularly. The Kaunas club team Žalgiris, named for a battle in which the Lithuanians repelled an invasion by the Teutonic Knights in 1410, won the European championship in 1988. This success has been a source of national pride. In particular, any victory that Žalgiris has had over a Russian team has outdone the eponymous battle in significance. Sport, when it is not merely amusement or business, has traditionally provided a rest from warfare, as well as preparation for warfare, but it can also serve as surrogate or inspiration: momentous anti-Soviet riots in Vilnius in 1976 followed Lithuanian victories in soccer games against Byelorussia and Russia.

Sadly, the Lithuanian roundball juggernaut is faltering, for its best players have come to want what every American athlete wants: lots of everything sweet. The deadeye guard Šarunas Marciulionis stars for the Golden State Warriors in the NBA; Arvydas Sabonis, a 7′ center who has been called the best non-American player ever, will probably join him in the U.S. next year; and other former teammates are playing in Western Europe. The only hope they will be reunited any time soon would be if the International Olympic Committee honored Lithuania's appeal to send a team under its own flag to the Games in 1992. From here, that appears unlikely.

Elegant dining has infiltrated Vilnius, in the form of the Stikles Restoranas. The first privately owned restaurant in Lithuania (there are a few others now, but none in its league), it was founded by a local entrepreneur, with the extensive assistance of a Philadelphia restaurant owner who had given similar help to culinary aspirants in Nicaragua and Vietnam. The restaurant's huge success has inspired the owner to look into opening another, in Rome. When Princess Caroline was in town, she dined at Stikles, and left a comely testimonial. An Englishman of discerning palate on a swing through the East could scarcely be coaxed to leave this refuge from socialist grease and gristle: in the guests' book, he exulted, "Civilization at last!" It is a quaint peculiarity of the modern democratic character, as it peruses the myriad accomplishments of man, to reserve its most impassioned admiration for really good chow.



Most Lithuanians find the heart of their civilization elsewhere than in the duck confit; and some guardians of civilization even fear that, when independence comes, that heart might be stolen by temptations rather coarser than those Stikles offers but still too scrumptious to resist. "A spiritually bad time is coming," Arvydas Juozaitis, a young philosopher, politician, and newspaper editor told me. "The wall will come down, and Western mass culture will come pouring in and flood us." A woman from Vilnius who reads and admires Juozaitis's weekly paper, *The Athens of the North*, stopped short of doomsaying but was apprehensive nonetheless: "We have resisted the East for a long time. But it is not certain we can resist the West." This is of course what the builders of the walls between East and West have been telling their captive populace all along: that the walls were built for their own protection. However, one must not confuse Juozaitis and his like-minded compatriots with the overlords they are working to get rid of. Juozaitis himself has written, "Then our ideal [of a just society], the star that shows our way, can be sought only in a social order ruled by law: that is, [in] the victory of liberal ideology and democracy."

Lithuanian intellectuals like Juozaitis are eager to embrace democracy; but



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they know she's carrying a knife in her garter. Their alarm is less intellectual than it is spiritual: "This may not seem serious to you," Juozaitis said, but the Roman Catholic Church will be Lithuania's fortress against the Western invasion, as it has been against the Eastern. Whether the nation can retain its distinctive culture once it has been reunited with Europe depends on how well Lithuanian souls are equipped to resist an unexampled wealth of pleasure. "We will all melt away without Christianity," Juozaitis warns. Most philosophers who do their philosophizing somewhere between, say, Dresden and Berkeley would sooner dissolve into a puddle on the spot than be caught talking like that.

Lithuanians are sufficiently unembarrassed about their nation's Christian soul that they tolerate it not only in their philosophers but even in their theater types. The Youth Theater of Vilnius, the nation's premier theater (and probably the best I have seen anywhere), has an imaginative foundation of nationalism reinforced by Christianity. In the six productions of theirs I've seen (they have a repertory of some two dozen plays, ten by Lithuanians), the leitmotif was spiritual endurance: how the soul seeks to preserve its integrity against forces determined to adulterate it, mutilate it, or simply blow it out like a match. The plays this company puts on live as they do because the actors so plainly know what fortitude is, and fear, and fatigue, and despair.

*Daukantas*, by Jonas Marcinkevicius, showed Lithuania's first historian struggling to bear the hard blows of history: when his brother dies in the Revolt of 1863, fired by a nationalism that Daukantas's writing helped to inspire, the scholar crumples under the accumulated pain of centuries, the tireless routine of slaughter and grief that a small nation endures at the hands of a larger one unconstrained by fear or remorse. *Dear Teacher*, by L. Razumovskaya, opened with a knock on the door that sounded like a summons to the sub-basement at the police station: it was a few of the elderly teacher's recently graduated students, who had come to offer her thanks, and to inform her that, if she does them a favor, they will do her a favor, with the help of their friends the secret police. The teacher resists superbly; until a couple of the thugs beat, and get ready to rape, a beautiful young woman who is in on the deal.

In the hands of the director Eimuntas Nekrosius, whom Arthur Miller has called a genius, Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* became a rendering of the Lithuanian soul under Soviet rule, an allegorical trial of patience. The set itself, with cruciform members outlining the house frame, embodied the company's Christian vision: the house owned by the foolish tyrant Professor Serebryakov was the place of travail for those who lived there, yet the suffering was clearly purposeful, and not without hope. When the various members of the household gathered to complain about Serebryakov, they launched into the great Verdi chorus from *Nabucco*, *"Va, pensiero,"* in which the Hebrew slaves captive in Babylon longed for their beautiful lost Jerusalem. That chorus had become the virtual anthem of Italian patriots who wanted an end to Austrian domination of their homeland. The liberties the Youth Theater took with Chekhov—and some Russian critics took offense when they performed *Uncle Vanya* in Leningrad—they took in the name of their nation's own liberty.

Two plays that Nekrosius adapted from novels depicted trials of resolve in action. In *Hunger*, based on Knut Hamsun's novel, vaguely, a cadaverous young man stops under a light downstage right to make some notes, and the moment he starts to write, the light goes out; center stage, the same; left, once again. He laughs drunkenly, then starts to cry, and, back to stage right again, he goes to sleep under the light, which is back on. By and by a demonic figure with a boathook comes and drags him off to a phantasmagoric flophouse gulag: there he undergoes a harrowing test of his extravagant joyous faith in God, and little by little discovers the way out. *The Hundred-Year-Long Day*, from the novel by the Soviet writer Chinghiz Aitmatov, stunningly portrayed the spiritual opposition between Kirghiz tribesmen in Soviet Central Asia and modernity embodied by Soviet power; between provincial tradition and what passes for imperial rationality. When a Kirghiz man who works as a signalman on the Soviet railway hears that his oldest friend has died, he ignores instructions to bury the man there, and sets about taking his remains to the tribal burial ground, as custom demands. Before setting off, he says to his own small son, whom he holds sleeping in his arms, "Sleep, dream, and remember. I have been to a funeral in the city and they say what work a man did . . . but nothing like a prayer. They have no past. They have no future. They have only the present moment."

**The rolling countryside between Vilnius and Kaunas looks rather like a pinier version of southern Indiana, and the backboard and rim that you spot in every small town indicates that this knob or hollow too has been smitten with Hoosier mania.**

The old beliefs hold true in Lithuania, making the present endurable, and the future possible. For years the Catholic faith was preserved in loving secrecy. Soviet enlightenment swept its searchlight across the ways of the old superstition, and then swept the refuse it found there out of the way of progress. The regime shut churches down and put them to use for the public good, as warehouses, gymnasiums, garages. As the writer Sigitas Gede remarked on a television show about religion, "If you can smash in a man's head, why not break the wings off an angel?" Priests went off to Siberia; seminaries closed; the seminary that remained open was riddled with KGB termites. What the Soviets wanted to do was to cut off the Lithuanian nation from its deepest source of strength. "Culture cannot be restored until the Church resumes the place it had," Gede averred.

For many, the Church never lost its place in their lives, even when it seemed in danger of being lost altogether. The morning of Independence Day, I saw an old woman place a flower at the feet of the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a small church courtyard, and, when I passed back the same way that night, there were several flowers scattered there, as well as one rather unprepossessing tuber in a Mason jar. Such individual acts of reverent gratitude, combined with the huge gatherings on ceremonial occasions—the Cathedral was packed for Mass that night—have made the nation's soul.

Outside the Cathedral young children lit candles at the foot of a very large cross to which a very small Christ was pinned. In Kaunas, at the Church of St. Vytautas the Great, a fifteenth-century building currently undergoing extensive renovation, the pastor took special pleasure in the work being done to expose the original brickwork in the sanctuary, and he likened the architectural labor to the effort to restore Lithuania to its pristine glory. The sermon he preached to a congregation that packed the church from the communion rail to the front door, he based on the First Epistle of Peter 3:14: "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." He called on Lithuania to show to the world a truly Christian nation, refusing a role in the endless bloodletting that the life of nations has always been. At the moment of the nation's self-celebration, he severely reminded his parishioners that the things nations tend to celebrate are very often spiritually destructive. The faith that sustained them when their country was virtually broken would have to guide them, as a people, when Lithuania was properly their own again.

## V

Soon they were to claim it as their own. The overwhelming Sajudis victory in the February and March elections—it gained over 90 of the 141 seats in the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet—edged the independence movement toward escape velocity, and the announcement from Moscow that Gorbachev was about to arrange for his investiture with extraordinary presidential powers—the provision for direct presidential rule of especially troublesome republics sounded disturbingly pointed—did the trick. On March 8 Gorbachev warned that if Lithuania seceded from the Soviet Union, it would owe Moscow $33 billion for all the good it's done for her in the way of infrastructure and such. Lithuania replied that it would submit a comparable bill for "moral and physical damage" to its people and land. On March 11 the legislature chose Vytautas Landsbergis as its head, and proclaimed Lithuania a straightforward republic rather than one of those Soviet Socialist simulacra. By a vote of 124-0, with six abstentions, the Council voted to restore Lithuania's independence, which, in Landsbergis's words, had been "illegally suppressed by a foreign power and its army."

The next day Gorbachev declared the declaration "illegal and invalid," an



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impudent Lilliputian charade that grown men would put an end to presently. The United States magnanimously reiterated that it had never recognized the Soviet regime in Lithuania, then announced, rather less magnanimously, that it was not about to give the Lithuanian regime the recognition it sought either: the new government needed to demonstrate that it had "effective control of its territory and [that it was] capable of entering into, and fulfilling, international obligations" before the U.S. would enter into formal diplomatic relations. The United States did not recognize the authority of the Soviet regime, which is to say, the authority of the Red Army; however, neither did it recognize the authority of the Lithuanian regime, because so long as the Red Army was in Lithuania it had the real authority. By the magic of diplomacy, when you looked the first time, the Red Army wasn't there and Lithuania was, and then when you looked again, the Red Army was there all right and suddenly Lithuania wasn't.

The Lithuanian government continued to insist it was very much there. It asserted jurisdiction over factories, ports, utilities; it installed its own border patrols and began to issue its own passports; it started to print its own money; it decreed that Lithuanian men no longer had to serve in the Red Army. Whenever the angry Gorbachev began to rumble, Landsbergis would remind everyone that the Gorbster was in charge of the country next door, and there only.

Gorbachev decided to show him otherwise. He dispatched extra troops to guard Lithuania's Russians and Poles from fascist nationalists in a killing frenzy. Foreign diplomats, two Americans among them, were sent packing. The Red Army ordered the return of fifteen hundred Lithuanian deserters, and bloodily ferreted some of them out of a mental hospital where they were hiding. Gorbachev ordered the Lithuanians to surrender any guns they might have, so that the only Minutemen Moscow had to worry about were reposing underground somewhere between Pocatello and Cedar Rapids. In response, Landsbergis intoned, "The ghost of Stalinism is walking in the Kremlin, and the shadow of it lies far to the west."

Before long the ghost was promenading about the streets of Vilnius: a fleet of tanks cruised past the Lithuanian parliament one morning, to remind legislators and their constituents of the Machiavellian lesson that there cannot be good laws where there are not good arms, and that where there are good arms there will surely be good laws. (At this point Machiavelli decided he'd said all he needed to say about laws, and went on to talk about arms.) Further to demonstrate how bad Lithuanian laws are, and how good Soviet ones, the Red Army seized Communist party headquarters and government buildings, including the offices of the chief prosecutor; the Lithuanian prosecutor and the lawless laws he had enforced gave way to a Soviet successor and a legal code with superior firepower.

When this calculated application of Soviet legality failed to produce the desired effect, Gorbachev showed everybody that there's plenty more law where that came from; jurisprudence to burn. The Soviet Union shut off the flow of all materials that Lithuania might conceivably sell for dollars. There was soon a shortage of medicine, and the reduced flow of oil and natural gas—Lithuania had gotten nearly its whole fuel supply from other Soviet republics—brought on layoffs and plant closings. In jaunty defiance, thousands of people held a political road rally in Vilnius, on bicycles. In mourning, they came again to honor the sacrifice of a Lithuanian man who had set himself on fire in a Moscow square. When Moscow television news reported his death, the announcer said that a suicide note in the press's possession indicated he'd killed himself over family troubles; in fact, the note stated unmistakably that he had done it to protest the most recent Soviet barbarities.

## VI

Of course, one man's barbarism is another's sacred rule of law; and the Soviets insist that Lithuania cannot reassert the independence that it lost in 1940, because it renounced that independence, willingly, hopefully, joyously, when it requested to be accepted into the Soviet Union. To inquire briefly into the nature of that request, and of the circumstances that prompted it, further illustrates the delicate interdependence between good laws and good arms. (A fuller account of the matter can be found in *Lithuania 700 Years*, edited by Albertis Gerutis, Manyland Books, Woodhaven, NY.)

According to the secret version of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which was signed on August 23, 1939, Lithuania was to be a Nazi prize. After Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, and Stalin invaded it on September 17, the Germans applied a diplomatic half-nelson to neutral Lithuania, trying to convince it to march its troops into Vilnius, the immemorial Lithuanian capital, which the Poles had seized in 1919 and had held since. Lithuania declared its preference to get Vilnius back peacefully, and, in a secret protocol to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the disgusted Germans signed Lithuania over to the Soviet Union in exchange for part of Poland and $7.5 million in gold.

The Soviet Union summarily insisted that each of the Baltic nations sign a mutual assistance treaty with her that would permit the Red Army to park some of its tanks there. The Lithuanian government refused at first; Moscow quickly made it clear that the Red Army—just a few of the boys, really—would be coming around soon, with a treaty or without one; the treaty was signed on October 10, 1939. Soviet diplomatic warm-heartedness put Lithuanian anxieties to rest with clauses limiting the number of troops allowed; proscribing the interference of one party in the internal affairs of the other, "especially in the economic and social system by military means . . . "; and preserving the inviolability of Lithuanian territory. Stalin tendered


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THE LEMLEY LETTER

**For the Individual Investor**

We have moved to a 50% to 60% invested position in most accounts by doing our Christmas shopping early. Since institutional investors have turned most technology stocks into 1989's biggest turkeys, we, ever the contrarians, have done some simple reasoning. If the market is going higher, the tech stocks will eventually participate, and if the market is going lower the tech stocks seem so sold out that lower prices will only make them more irresistible. By any standard, with IBM, Hewlett Packard, and Digital Equipment selling at 1.2 times book, and .8 times sales, even old Ben Graham's eyes would be brightening.

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But computer makers are the only area that stirs our juices. Really folks, we aren't being obstinate ostriches. The pendulum swings and the farther up it goes the harder down it will come. That doesn't mean it will happen with a "whoosh" (or a "swoosh" in Nike's case), and it may be rotational—but, up till now, only in Japan do stocks climb to the sky and keep on going.

*—from The Lemley Letter dated December 1989*

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his personal assurance that he had Lithuania close to his heart. This mutual assistance sounded like a real sweetheart deal, on paper; in practice, it meant that Lithuania was to help the Soviet Union take what it wanted from her, while the Soviet Union would help Lithuania know precisely what it was that it wanted.

Before long it became terribly clear just how much the Soviet Union wanted, and how peremptory the desire was. In May 1940 Mother Russia, solicitous of her defenseless wandering brood, accused Lithuania of shanghaiing some of her boys stationed there. A Lithuanian investigation into the matter concluded that the misplaced soldiers were off doing what Russian soldiers do when they have the chance: getting drunk, sleeping it off, or making their getaway. The Soviet charges grew more bizarrely malign in reply: the Lithuanians were extracting military secrets from the purloined soldiers, to the end of launching an assault on the Soviet garrisons; moreover, Lithuania had secretly sealed a military alliance with Latvia and Estonia, and Baltic schoolchildren were sneaking around the forests, gathering kindling in preparation for putting the Kremlin to the torch.

Impelled by these hallucinations, the Soviets declared the mutual assistance treaty broken, and issued an ultimatum: Moscow instructed Lithuania to arrange for the punishment of the offending members of its government; to form a new government that would not give offense; and to welcome as many Red Army troops as might be needed to ensure their own safety in that perilous land. Molotov assured the Lithuanian government that, however it might respond, the Red Army was definitely coming, and in truly glorious force this time. The Lithuanian president abdicated and fled to Germany the day the Red Army moved in, June 15, 1940.

The few decent men who were allowed a place in the new government served strictly as camouflage for the brutes. The Communists who headed the Ministry of the Interior and the security forces effectively did the governing. Purges cleaned out the army, police, and state bureaucracy in a hurry. Russians who took their orders from the Soviet Legation gained command of this and that.

Of course, they had every intention of taking command of the works. Molotov told the Lithuanian premier, Krève-Mickevicius, that Lithuania had a great destiny for so small a nation: to serve the far greater destiny of the titanic Russian nation. Stalin was only finishing the work that Ivan the Terrible had started, bulldozing a great wide way from Moscow to the Baltic. It was the duty of small nations, in the face of so superb an imperial undertaking, simply to "disappear." The Soviet constitution was designed to make such disappearance a matter-of-fact affair. The Lithuanians would ask to be annexed to the Soviet Union; and the Soviet Union, like a tenderhearted lady at the dog pound, could never find it in herself to turn down that woebegone look, that needy whimper. When Krève-Mickevicius dared to insist that the Lithuanian people would never ask to give up their freedom, Molotov set him straight: "We'll know how to teach the Lithuanian people."

Krève-Mickevicius was given a prolonged sick leave—one of those colds that won't go away—and a Communist installed in his place. The new government called for a national election to the People's Diet on July 14. On July 7 a new political organization, the Union of Labor Lithuania, proclaimed the fraternal union between Lithuania and the USSR, although it failed to mention that the union it had in mind required the larger brother to eat the smaller. The Union of Labor Lithuania did not count many Lithuanian laborers among its membership; but it knew how to get the job done without them. On July 11 and 12, some 2,000 leaders of the "anti-state parties"—under the circumstances, a category that a party was unlikely not to find itself in—were arrested. Only the Union of Labor Lithuania was permitted to submit candidates in the election.

The government touted the elections as supremely democratic, however, and as the elections might seem somewhat less democratic if no one were to vote, it was announced that every voter's passport would be stamped, and those who failed to vote were to be denoted enemies of the people. The democratic elections produced the customary totalitarian results: with 95.5 percent of eligible voters voting—a figure that only the wonders of Soviet science could determine so exactly, for no roll of eligible voters existed—the Union of Labor Lithuania got 99.19 percent of the votes.

The Soviet Union had arranged for the election of the People's Diet so that the Diet would proclaim Lithuania a Soviet Republic and petition the Soviet Union for membership. Convened in the town theater in Kaunas, the Diet attracted a real crowd. Everyone wanted to take part in the democratic process on this grand occasion: among the actual members of the Diet sat soldiers of the Red Army, representatives of the Soviet Legation, and ambassadors of good will from Moscow. The Soviets who did not belong in the parliament outnumbered the Lithuanians who did. When the vote came, everyone voted; and even if there was someone who refused to vote for the resolution, he was held to be of no official consequence, for the measure was said to pass unanimously, as is best in such matters.

**Although Gorbachev has finally admitted the illegality of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, he stands by the legality of the Lithuanian request for admission to the Soviet Union.**

Although Gorbachev has finally admitted the illegality of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, he stands by the legality of the Lithuanian request for admission to the Soviet Union. Nobody believes him, but he knows that makes no difference; the important thing is that nobody dispute him, for the lack of disagreement permits him to behave as though it were true. The United States is willing to speak the truth only so far as it will not insult Gorbachev, and that leaves untruth plenty of room to maneuver.

The Soviet Union has scored an invaluable coup in convincing the American press, politicians, and people to adopt the official Soviet manner of speaking about Lithuanian independence: what the Lithuanians did was an act of secession, which is not necessarily bad in itself, for there are legal ways of going about it; but their way was illegal. Now nobody believes that Lithuania is justly part of the Soviet Union, but everybody is afraid that, if Lithuania regains its independence, the Soviet Union will either fall apart in a bloody shambles or that the ghost of Stalin will cast a shadow clear across the Atlantic. So it is that Americans concede that there must be some significant portion of truth to the Soviet claim that Lithuania is not seeking to regain what the Soviet Union took from her, but is rather trying to take something from the Soviet Union.

This inverted understanding propagates two varieties of moral slackness verging on stupor. The first—the common understanding of the matter—gives itself credit for being both ethically astute and *realpolitisch*, when it is in fact craven and willfully blind: it holds justice and its opposite to be the same thing, because to make the obvious distinction between them would mean to side with one against the other, and that is an unpleasant task when the just nation has only justice to commend it while the unjust one has fearsome power. Americans love an underdog, until the overdog lunges their way and shows its teeth; then they wonder why the underdog should want to be running loose with the other puppies when it could be playing just as happily in the overdog's stomach.

The second form of moral failure is a refined variant of the first, and it is this that afflicts President Bush and his foreign policy advisers. They have convinced themselves that their soothing diplomatic ways, their decorous avoidance of unpleasantness in word or deed, will bring the Soviet Union around in time to doing just the sort of thing the West would like it to do; that is, they have convinced themselves that Gorbachev really wants precisely what we want, and the best thing we can do is to stay out of his way while he does everybody a favor. Such a policy is all hope and no will; it relies imprudently upon the good graces of a ruler who has demonstrated his capacity to be ungraciously cruel.

When Lithuania declared its independence, it looked to the great democracies for help: official diplomatic recognition at that time, Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene has stated, would have made Moscow back down. Perhaps she too was guilty of too much hope; but the great democracies were guilty of far worse, and not for the first time.

In Kaunas, the Sunday after Independence Day, by the monument to Freedom—there were hundreds of flowers strewn around its base, and candles standing everywhere—a girl maybe eight or nine years old was trying to light one candle with another. She tried and tried, but the wind was strong, and the flame just wouldn't take; finally the wind blew out the candle she was using, and the girl looked over at her mother, shrugged her shoulders, and then went about getting that candle lit again, from another. She returned then to the candle she hadn't been able to light, keeping at it this time until she got it; and then she worked her way around all the candles that were out, lighting every one. But by the time she had finished, some of the ones she had had aflame a moment ago were extinguished already. She shrugged again, and went back to work. □



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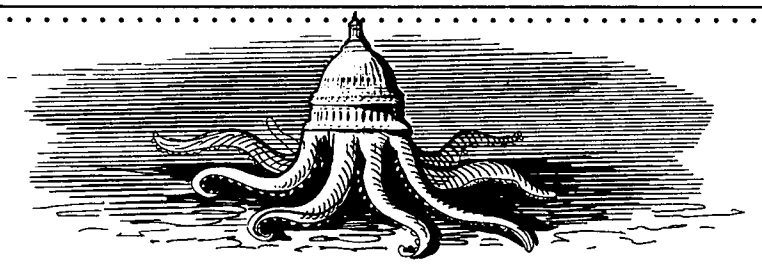


## SQUISH LIST REPUBLICANS

by Tim W. Ferguson and Tom Miller

In the wake of what was once called the Reagan Revolution, free-market supporters are today waging a holding action in Congress, trying to resist the majority's bent for re-regulation, higher taxation, protectionism, and increased spending. Not that the situation is necessarily bleak. To the degree that the White House will assist with the veto, all it takes is a committed one-third to sustain the gains of the late 1970s and early 1980s (such as they were).

Getting that third isn't so easy, however, particularly when many members of Congress who could survive politically as principled foes of statism—even to the point of resisting pork-barreling for their constituents—nevertheless become creatures of Washington. What follows is an attempt to identify the most wasted opportunities on Capitol Hill: the politicians who could rise above baser considerations but don't.

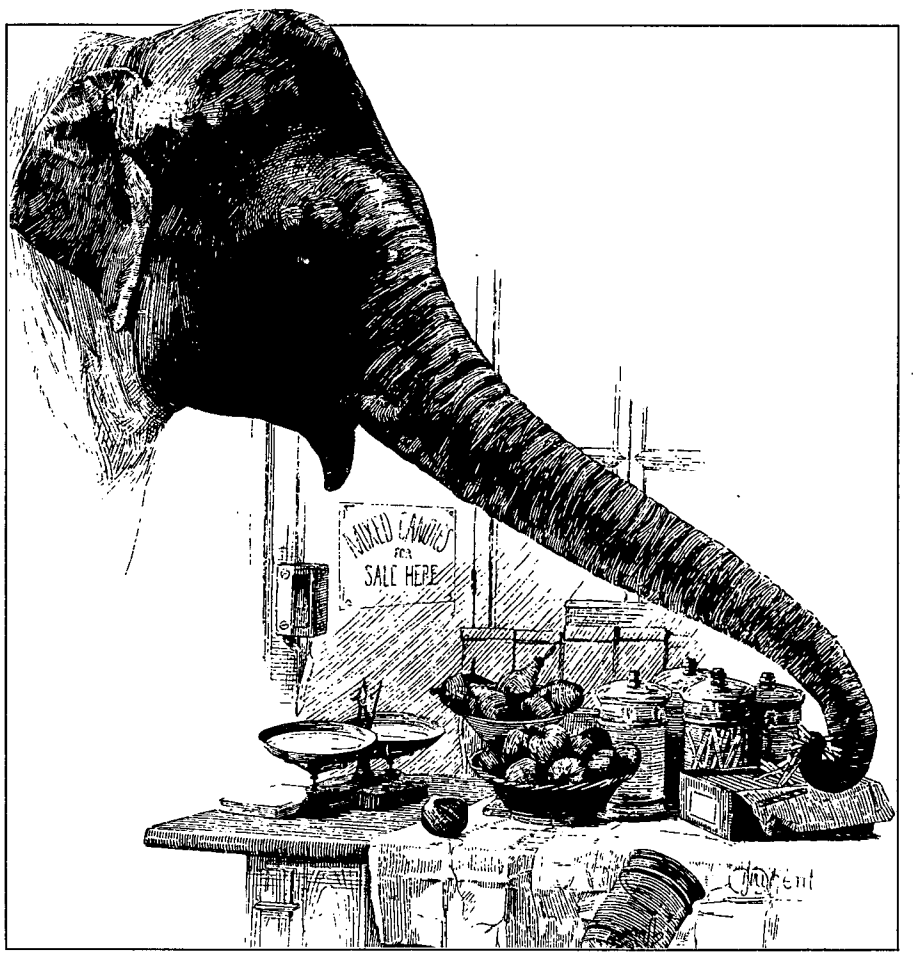
We've limited the search to Republicans, because Democrats are presumed to be under such pressure from the party's leadership, particularly on substantive matters disguised as procedural votes, that they cannot reasonably be expected to part consistently from the majority line. And we've looked only at the House of Representatives; the Senate, for a variety of reasons, doesn't draw the philosophical battle lines as clearly. One reason for that is that members elected statewide tend not to have the "safe" electoral base that allows for a resolute record. In that regard, we've used a 58 percent or higher vote in the district for the Bush-Quayle ticket in 1988 as the threshold for determining what is hospitable territory. The last criterion is why you won't find some familiar GOP contras—the Sylvio Contes, Claudine Schneiders, Bill Greens, and Constance Morellas—on this list. We're not demanding suicidal heroism, only a liv-

*Tim W. Ferguson is "Business World" columnist of the* Wall Street Journal. *Tom Miller is a senior policy analyst with the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.*

able fidelity to smaller government.

An assumption underlies the scoring here. Each vote is evaluated simply on its face—does it expand or contract government? No account is taken of the various second-order strategies, be they those of "Big Government Conservatives" or "Opportunity Society" wedge-players who believe that certain forms of statism can head off or cure worse strains. Such scheming may have selective merit, but it does not lend itself to objective measurement, and besides, over the course of many votes a politician's true inclinations ought to be evident through the haze of occasional heresy.

"Wet" is a term of disparagement that American politics has picked up from Britain, where it's applied to Conservative MPs who lack the courage of Maggie Thatcher's convictions. In the U.S. under Ronald Reagan the term evolved to "squishes." Here, then, is a Squish List of a dozen members who met the criteria above and yet have voted for *bigger* government on more than half the roll calls monitored by the Competitive Enterprise Institute from 1985-89. Following them, we mention a collection of folks who are moist enough to risk moderation mildew. (For a full list of players and scores, consult the table on page 28.)




**Charles (Chip) Pashayan** of California's San Joaquin Valley has been tilling the Washington soil on behalf of his farmers for six terms. Sometimes that means plowing under the common interest of agriculture in free trade in favor of a special constituency, such as when he followed the cotton growers' line and twice voted to override presidential vetoes of textile protectionism. He also voted to override Ronald Reagan's veto of a highway pork bill—apparently Mr. Pashayan likes the asphalt lobby. He also was friendly to Charles Keating's interests, and contributions from the S&L ne'er-do-well may give this Rules Committee member trouble this fall.

**Matthew J. Rinaldo** is a nine-termer from New Jersey whose district ranges from Elizabeth to Summit. He is the ranking Republican on the Energy and Commerce subcommittee from which Edward Markey of Massachusetts stirs up so much trouble as chairman. Too often, Mr. Rinaldo is along for the ride. Both want further regulation of the securities and broadcasting industries. Mr. Rinaldo once praised John Shad for his cost-cutting at the Securities and Exchange Commission, but has been selling unfettered finance short of late. He also is loud about fuel-oil price jumps, and wants to prevent U.S. consumers from buying some foreign luxury autos on the "gray market" that don't meet all the regulations put on our homemade vehicles. And, not to miss a beat, he was one of the leading panderers to the Social Security "notch babies."

World War II may never have ended for **Helen Delich Bentley**. The cantankerous third-termer from suburban Baltimore was part of the infamous Toshiba sledge-hammering caucus outside the Capitol a few years back and hasn't stopped swinging at foreign products, particularly Japanese goods, since. And it's not just to protect her local shipbuilders and steelmakers. She doesn't like Sony getting into Hollywood, and she even antagonized the district's longshoremen by battling the imports that help to keep them employed. Mrs. Bentley now has emerged as the effective leader of what amounts to the Maryland Republican party, vanquishing the New Right (or at least the non-protectionists among that wing).

Jim Courter escaped inclusion in the depressing dozen only by his decision to leave Congress (we only touch live wires). But there is more bad news from New Jersey: a couple of go-along, get-alongs named **Dean Gallo** and **James Saxton**. The former sits on the Appropriations Committee and is thus in



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a better position to do damage, but Mr. Saxton was a one-man army in trying to spare Fort Dix, in his district, from the first round of domestic base closings. Mr. Gallo, from a well-off suburban district, has courageously sought higher pay for federal employees in expensive areas. Mr. Saxton of the Pine Barrens, meanwhile, was beefing about his own pay, which he noted will rise only slightly under the raise he helped to enact last year. Alas, his voting score hasn't been rising at all.

**Hamilton Fish, Jr.** of New York is the son of an Old Right congressman and father of a left-wing Democrat who failed to win his own House seat in 1988. The incumbent is in the middle of the Fish clan politically as well as generationally. Which is not to say he is a mainstream Republican. Rather, in his more than twenty years in office, he's emerged as a fairly reliable ally of the public sector. And it's not just pandering to interests in his district—he is co-sponsoring with Ted Kennedy a bill to override the Supreme Court's limits on racial favoritism, and he has been a big backer of statehood for the District of Columbia. Who knows—with his voting record he might run for senator there.

When the *Wall Street Journal* took dead aim at **Joseph McDade** of Pennsylvania, shortly after he was elected to a 13th term in 1988, with a front-page story detailing a criminal investigation of kickbacks from some Pentagon minority set-asides, he looked like a goner. But no charges have been filed and Mr. McDade is still engaged in the perfectly legal racket of *buying* votes. With seniority on the Appropriations Committee, he's positioned to be an all-star porker, and it's difficult to find any beats he's missed. Water projects, college research grants, historic preservation, veterans facilities, rail museums —you name it (you got it). Of course, Mr. McDade must relax occasionally, and for that there are expenses-paid junkets to the NCAA's Final Four basketball tournament (courtesy Ocean Spray) and a Placido Domingo concert (General Dynamics). Bravo, Giuseppe!

**Arthur Ravenel** of South Carolina was prepared to join the Democrat party last year until Lee Atwater interceded to keep him in the GOP ranks. Or, at least nominally in. With his advocacy of shooting down suspected courier planes and machine-gunning the survivors, he might be a commando in the Bush-Bennett drug war, but don't let that Charleston drawl fool you: he's been a peacenik when it comes to battling big government. Sometimes his rhetoric even gets flowery, as when he explained his freshman-year desertion over the 1987 highway-bill veto with the quote, "You can bet your spring petunias that this congressman will vote to override. President Reagan, he ain't gonna be running in '88, but I am." Mr. Ravenel's pork-barrel interest in that matter was a $15 million bridge to the coastal island communities that were themselves creatures of federal largesse and would be back at Uncle Sam's door after Hurricane Hugo struck the following year.

Curiously enough, what nearly drove Mr. Ravenel to a more honest registration was **Don Young** of Alaska. A House member since 1973, Mr. Young pulled rank on the Interior Committee, where he looks out for the resource industry while the South Carolinian has other fish to fry. Mr. Young also is quite attentive to Alaska's slew of federal employees. Fortunately, he is not considered a major player despite his seniority.

First elected to Congress when John Kennedy was President, **James H. Quillen** of Tennessee is an occasional brake on social spending but for the most part a deal-cutter in the pork-belly trading pit. A onetime small businessman, he now helps oversee the congressional conglomerate as ranking Republican on the powerful Rules Committee. "Jimmy" Quillen is, well . . . the current *Almanac of American Politics* tells it best: "For theories of the convergence of high-tech and traditional values, for free market economics or long-range political strategies, he has no interest at all. This is a bread-and-butter politician, interested in doing things for his district, and concerned with protecting and strengthening his own position as its representative."

Richard Nixon's congresswoman, **Marge Roukema** of New Jersey, unseated an incumbent in Ronald Reagan's 1980 sweep but she's been AWOL from the cause ever since. The ranking Republican on the housing subcommittee, she fights to protect Community Development Block Grants and increase aid to vagrants. "If we were doing to animals what we are doing to the homeless on our streets," she once allowed, the Humane Society "would be mounting a campaign against us." She is equally solicitous of those with second homes, shooting down a Treasury trial balloon not long back with a petition demanding that the mortgage-interest tax deduction not be changed in any way, shape, or form. Rep. Roukema, a former teacher, fancies herself a fiscal conservative (she was vocal about the deficit back when the Washington press was hysterical about it) but her bleeding heart is obviously elsewhere.

**Curt Weldon** of Pennsylvania is the last and perhaps most mystifying of our dirty dozen. In office barely three years, he appears to identify socially with the young Turks of the party caucus and not with the old horse traders. Yet his voting record smells as if he's been sweeping out the stables. Surely there aren't enough jackasses on the Swarthmore College faculty to explain this as a district problem, although Democrat Bob Edgar was elected from it five times before moving on to lose a statewide race (Mr. Weldon had nearly ousted him from Congress in 1984). He was once a mayor, which may be a clue, and the district is certainly on Mr. Weldon's mind—he's fought to protect the Philadelphia Navy Yard and to keep Dick Cheney from stopping production of the V-22 "Osprey." But his primary passion appears to be fire safety in the Capitol, a carryover from his days as a volunteer firefighter. If that means curtailing the volume of member "newsletters" backing up outside the mail room, great, although on the general undesirability of a congressional conflagration, reasonable men could differ.

## Competitive Enterprise Index for 1985-1989

| House Republicans Studied | Pro-Market Votes Out of Total Votes Cast | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Bentley | 115-290 | 40 |
| Bereuter | 168-302 | 56 |
| Conte | 72-297 | 24 |
| Coughlin | 133-295 | 45 |
| Courter | 114-234 | 49 |
| Davis | 69-280 | 25 |
| Edwards | 192-283 | 68 |
| Fish | 102-290 | 35 |
| Gallo | 147-301 | 49 |
| Gingrich | 200-290 | 69 |
| Green | 117-296 | 40 |
| Hammerschmidt | 177-298 | 59 |
| Horton | 59-286 | 21 |
| Houghton | 120-218 | 55 |
| Hyde | 194-278 | 70 |
| Lewis | 162-274 | 59 |
| Lowery | 181-290 | 62 |
| McCollum | 207-289 | 72 |
| McDade | 81-281 | 29 |
| Michel | 205-283 | 72 |
| Morella | 61-218 | 28 |
| Morrison | 153-303 | 50 |
| Myers | 150-289 | 52 |
| Parris | 146-287 | 51 |
| Pashayan | 119-293 | 41 |
| Quillen | 140-285 | 49 |
| Ravenel | 103-220 | 47 |
| Regula | 141-303 | 47 |
| Rinaldo | 79-300 | 26 |
| Rogers | 165-298 | 55 |
| Roukema | 129-296 | 44 |
| Rowland | 153-296 | 52 |
| Saxton | 150-303 | 50 |
| Schneider | 97-284 | 34 |
| Schuette | 164-300 | 55 |
| Schulze | 172-287 | 60 |
| Shays | 66-159 | 42 |
| Skeen | 168-303 | 55 |
| C. Smith | 73-303 | 24 |
| Snowe | 120-302 | 40 |
| Weber | 190-300 | 63 |
| Weldon | 105-211 | 50 |
| D. Young | 111-284 | 39 |



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When there is weakness in the ranks, you always have to look to the top for part of the explanation. The Republican leadership in the House has long been the focus of grumbling by activist conservatives. Indeed, all of them have CEI scores barely above the party mean of 64 percent—all except GOP Conference chairman **Jerry Lewis** of California's Inland Empire, that is. Despite a cake-walk district, Mr. Lewis can't even vote right three times out of five. He played a big role in dooming reform of the Davis-Bacon wage floor on public works in the last session.

**Bob Michel** of Illinois personifies for many the squishy nature of the minority hierarchy, yet his scores turn out even higher than those for **Mickey Edwards** of Oklahoma *and* **Newt Gingrich**. Leadership positions don't necessarily entail compromises with principle, we must note—**Vin Weber** of Minnesota and **Bill McCollum** of Florida well outperform the mean. However, **Henry Hyde**, a prospective replacement for Mr. Michel and another conservative favorite, also scores below the current minority leader.

State delegations tend to travel in packs, and to drag up or down the scores of marginal members. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Michigan aren't fertile ground for economic libertarianism. Florida, Texas, and California turf, on the other hand, braces up the wavering. Therefore, it is disappointing to find **Bill Lowery** of San Diego so weak on pork-barrel and other budget issues.

Some members who'd been bottom-fishing for a while managed to float up on a tide of rising partisan resolution in 1989—**John Paul Hammerschmidt** of Arkansas, for example, and **Hal Rogers** of Kentucky, **Joseph R. Skeen** of New Mexico, and **Richard T. Schulze** of Pennsylvania (he fights imports of foreign mushrooms). Mr. Hammerschmidt nevertheless perniciously acted to clear his committee for takeoff of legislation to block foreign investments in U.S. airlines (in the end, the bill remained grounded). These four all come from districts where Bush-Quayle were boffo.

Other Republicans from ideological strongholds persisted in their political androgyny through 1989, but have managed to maintain CEI voting records above the 50 percent cutoff we've used for our Squish List. A weak year in 1990 could put them on the dishonor roll next time around. They are **John Myers** of Indiana, **John Rowland** of Connecticut, **Bill Schuette** of Michigan (a candidate for the U.S. Senate this year), **Amory Houghton** of New York, and **Stan Parris** of Virginia. (Mr. Houghton, a scion of the Corning Glass fortune, pointed the way with his observation that the plant-closing bill wasn't so bad because big businesses already had notification policies.)

**Doug Bereuter** of Nebraska and **Sid Morrison** of Washington occupy a special category of members from marginally Republican districts with even more marginally free-enterprise voting records. Finally, some Republicans sport such disgustingly *dirigiste* voting records that they deserve mention even though their districts gave Bush-Quayle less than 58 percent—but still a majority—of the vote. These include **Robert J. Davis** of Michigan, **Christopher Shays** of Connecticut (a new Lowell Weicker?), **Olympia Snowe** of Maine, **Christopher Smith** of New Jersey, **Frank Horton** of New York, **Ralph S. Regula** of Ohio, and **Lawrence Coughlin** of Pennsylvania.

Bad as this lot may be, the nature of congressional incumbency these days means that most all of them will be around for as long as they wish, monopolizing seats that in most cases could be turned into bastions of resistance to nineties-style statism. Of course, should a limit on terms somehow be enacted . . . One gets a sense from this sampling of what good it could do—and not only in dislodging Democrats. □


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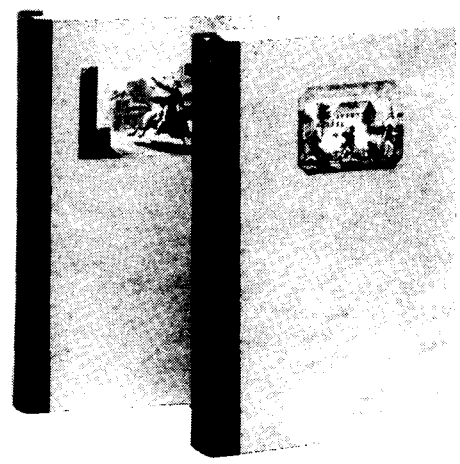

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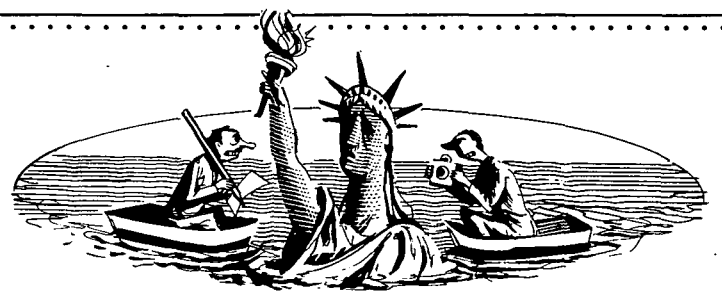

## TWO FOR ONE

by Terry Eastland

On May 10, four days after the announcement of the budget summit that could lead to "some new taxes," I opened my *Washington Post* and was drawn immediately to a front-page, above-the-fold story by Ann Devroy and John E. Yang. "White House Tries to Calm GOP Fears on Tax Stand," the headline read. And then, grist for my mill, the fourth paragraph leaped off the page and eventually into this column:

> A senior White House official, traveling on the plane from Costa Rica to Washington early yesterday with First Lady Barbara Bush and White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu, told reporters that the "no preconditions" description of the [summit] negotiations meant that Democrats could propose tax increases but that the White House would veto them. The official said that public statements by Republican [congressional] leaders . . . that the White House is considering a range of tax increases are not true.

I read on:

> "We're allowing [Democrats] to bring their good arguments for taxes to the table," the senior official said. . . . "They were not persuasive last time, and they are likely not to be persuasive again. But if they want to come to the table and say they put [tax increases] there, it is their prerogative to put them on the table, and it's our prerogative to say no. And I emphasize the no."

Who was this senior official? Devroy and Yang helped me out in the next paragraph, calling the person in question "the main White House link to conservatives." Not *a*, but *the*. Sure sounds like Sununu, I thought, but how could that be if the source was traveling with the First Lady *and* Sununu? Yet who else could it be? "Tax options are not the right economic answer" to the deficit, he told the *Post*. This main link to conservatives, I'm also informed, "sharply chastised reporters and officials who have speculated about a possible tax increase."

And, further, he is quoted as saying, in response to a query about whether there was any way the White House would agree to a tax increase: "You've got a one-track mind on a trivial question. Small minds ask small questions." Ouch!

I figured the day's events would establish the source's identity. Sure enough, on the evening news that night no longer were we talking sources but Sununu. My qualified guess was right. Which leads me to ask some questions.

For starters, who identified Sununu as the Main Link? Sununu didn't. "Others on the plane with him" did the deed, the *Post* told its readers the next day, May 11, in a story relegated to page A24. Which others? The paper did not say; that is, it used unnamed sources to identify a previously unnamed source! Even more bizarre, I know the manifest for this particular Costa Rican flight. There were eight reporters on board (not to mention several camera crew and photographers). And the officials, besides Sununu and the First Lady, included their assistants, Ed Rogers and Anna Perez. And there was Roger Ailes, of campaign fame. I doubt any of the officials were among the *Post*'s "others," especially not Perez, for a reason to be revealed. Perhaps Ailes was. But I'm prepared to believe that the "others" included reporters, which is to say *they* doubled as unnamed sources. The *Post* has given new meaning to the term "insider journalism."

One of the sources was probably the *Post*'s own Donnie Radcliffe, who covers the First Lady and thus traveled with Mrs. Bush to Costa Rica for the inauguration of that country's new president. Devroy and Yang were not aboard the flight, but were instead the beneficiaries of Radcliffe as eyewitness. Indeed, at the bottom of the original story, below an eight-point line, in italics, the *Post* noted: *"Staff writer Donnie Radcliffe contributed to this report."* Contributed? She got the story.

Another source was Frank Murray of the *Washington Times*. He let the word "Sununu" part his lips as he framed a question about the import of the "senior official's" remarks for White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater during the daily briefing on May 10. In case any reporter doubted that the unnamed source was Sununu, here was someone who'd been on the plane actually naming him. So the *Post* had enough "others on the plane" to identify Sununu in its next-day story. It preferred them over Vice President Dan Quayle, who unwittingly became a source—on the record, no less—when he fell for a reporter's question framed in terms of "what John Sununu had said." "What John Sununu was trying to say," began the Veep.

Why the *Post*'s strange "others on the plane" sourcing of something now on the record, out in the open? Habit, I'd say—the bad habit of excessive reliance on unnamed sources.

As for why the *Post* described its unnamed source in the May 10 story as someone "traveling" with Sununu when that someone turned out to be Sununu, I chalk that up to genuine puzzlement within the *Post* as to what to do. Those commissioned to study these things, as I am, will note that there was something Kissingerian in the phrasing; when he was national security adviser and secretary of state, Henry Kissinger often spoke on background while in flight somewhere or other, and would be identified as "a senior official traveling on Henry Kissinger's plane." The problem for the *Post*, of course, is that this plane wasn't Sununu's but the First Lady's. A more sensible option might have been: a senior White House official traveling with First Lady Barbara Bush, period.

I can't fault the *Post* or the *Washington Times*, the only news organizations of the eight represented on the plane to report the senior official's

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*Terry Eastland is resident scholar at the National Legal Center for the Public Interest.*



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remarks, for their stories. They came at a time of intense Washington interest in a fresh, developing story about the budget summit. And it was Sununu who was talking.

Still, in retrospect, this wasn't much of a story. It's not as though Sununu decided, hey, I want to orchestrate a story that puts out the line against tax increases. I'm told by a reporter on the plane that the matter wasn't "a topic he really wanted to talk to." My sources—I've got them, too, you know—tell me that Sununu's "summit" comments in fact came at the end of a give-and-take with reporters on a variety of subjects, including the swearing-in of the new Costa Rican president, the fighting in El Salvador, and the First Lady's work during the trip. The discussion was largely about diplomatic matters, which often are dealt with on background. And that's why Sununu was on background in the first place.

Nonetheless, *Time*'s Dan Goodgame saw in these in-flight remarks evidence of some master plan, another instance of the intentional "good-cop, bad-cop routine" in which Bush plays the former, Sununu the latter. However true that might be in other circumstances, it's hard to believe it happened aboard the White House jet. Whatever one makes of Sununu's remarks about taxes, I think he was acting on his own, undirected by George Bush.

As for the substance of what Sununu did say, there wasn't much here either. For once you demystify the Sununu comments by putting them on the record (what is on background carries a presumption of intrigue) and parsing them, Sununu was saying no more than that George Bush retains the ability to say, once again, "no new taxes."

And now for Anna Perez, who keeps tight lips indeed. Perez is Barbara Bush's press secretary, and was press officer for the trip. A half hour or so after Sununu had finished talking with reporters, she returned to the rear of the plane (from the front, where the officials sit) to amend the ground rules. Perez's job, of course, is to separate Mrs. Bush from controversy. So she asked that the senior official not be described as traveling with the First Lady. Retroactive ground rules usually don't fly with reporters, and they didn't in this case. When I asked Perez a few questions about this ground rule matter, she said: "Whatever the ground rule was, for whoever it was who was talking, was for the press in attendance."

Okay, I've been in your shoes, Anna. A little less opacity, please. What was the ground rule?

"I think enough has been said about that plane trip."

And so it has.

• • •

On April 28, an anti-abortion Rally for Life took place in Washington. Some 200,000 showed up on the Mall, according to Park police, 600,000 if you accept the organizers' claims. A big crowd, by any count. But you had to work hard to find coverage of the event in the only local paper to be published on Sundays in Washington.

I refer, of course, to the *Washington Post*, which ran a 16-inch story accompanied by two photographs in its Metro section. The *New York Times*, by contrast, began its fifty-five column inches of coverage (allocated to three stories and accompanied by three photographs) on the front page, as the lead. Other out-of-town organs such as the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* ran major front-page stories. Unlike these others, moreover, the *Post*'s story was content-thin. Remarkably, the first five paragraphs (out of seventeen) were devoted to the question of whether the attendance was 200,000 or three times that.

I asked Leonard Downie, the *Post*'s managing editor, about his paper's virtual noncoverage of the rally. Covering marches, which typically occur on weekends when the newspaper is short-staffed, is the responsibility of the Metro staff, he said. When the judgment is made that a given rally is a major story, the responsibility can shift to the national staff. That should have happened in this case, he said. Why didn't it? The younger, less seasoned Metro staffers didn't understand the story's importance, he said. Neither did the more veteran members of the national staff. "Otherwise, they would have horned in."

Is there a bias at the newspaper that influences abortion coverage? After all, a year ago some of Downie's reporters joined in an abortion rights rally that drew 125,000 (Park police estimate) and front-page *Post* coverage. (Afterwards, Downie sent his staff a memo drawing the line against their participating in rallies.) Downie said he "was concerned about [possible bias] and checked into it," but concluded there was none. He thinks the problem is cultural, in the sense that his reporters don't know anyone in the pro-life movement. They don't have friends or relatives or neighbors involved. By contrast, they know people in the abortion rights and environmental movements. Not only last year's abortion rights rally but also this year's Earth Day extravaganza (six days before the Rally for Life) received what can only be described as mega-coverage from the *Post*.

Downie did not try to justify the *Post*'s treatment of the Rally for Life. To the contrary, he admitted that "we made a terrible mistake." In an obvious effort to repair the damage, the *Post* ran a front-page story on the rally on Monday, April 30. For the future, Downie has advised his reporters that as professionals they must make the effort to understand all groups.

I wish Downie luck. Most if not all of his reporters recognize the newspaper's mistake. They do not wish to repeat it. And it would seem that professionalism is within their grasp. After all, the *New York Times*, whose reporters come from the same cultural milieu as the *Post*'s, was able to produce a story on the Rally for Life that was fair and comprehensive. The *Post*'s failure has put it conspicuously on the spot. Another mistake of this magnitude will determine whether the newspaper is hopelessly out of touch with some major currents in American life. □


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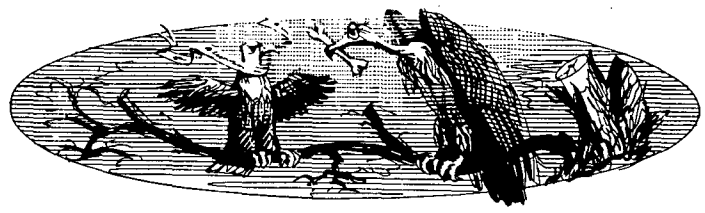

# ZEALOTS AGAINST SCIENCE

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

I have just read a very illuminating manuscript that you, dear reader, may never be able to read. It deals coolly, analytically, and at times quite brilliantly with one of the growing number of groups achieving veto power over those aspects of our lives where they consider themselves experts. Though by the world's standards America has always been a free society, it has been preyed upon by zealots from its incunabular days. Some of our fanatics have pursued worthy causes such as abolition. Others have pursued repellent causes such as nativism and prohibition. All are usually unpleasant individuals with a sleepless bug in the bonnet and very little solicitude for the rights of others. Most have been a threat to freedom, and right now I believe there are more such authoritarians on the loose than at any time since the 1920s, the glory days of both the Ku Klux Klan and the Prohibitionists.

But today's Bill of Rights-burners rarely stake out an issue broadly affecting the citizenry in the way Prohibition broadly affected the citizenry. If they did it would be much easier to muster a majority against them. Instead they settle into an area relatively remote from the citizenry's daily concern, for instance the area of laboratory animal rights activists, opponents of Western curricula in universities, and food crusaders. And they come down relentlessly on particular substances in the environment about which Americans care very little, for instance, asbestos, alar, styrofoam, tobacco. The list is long. The claims are hair-raising. The consequences have rarely been an improvement in American life, though companies have been bankrupted and workers have lost their jobs.

Much more importantly, the personal liberties of Americans have been imperiled and at times restricted. New precedents in intolerance have been set. With increasing frequency science has been politicized, and scientists have been diverted from the unfettered pursuit of truth by boycotting zealots, government agencies enthralled to special interests, grant programs with an agenda shaped by the half-baked zealots of the moment rather than the curiosity or informed speculations of scientists.

Free scientific inquiry has been one of the Republic's most valuable assets. It has allowed advances in vast areas of life. Yet today it is curiously threatened by the fanatics. The manuscript that I have just read may never be published by a major publishing house because it takes issue with a very influential group of zealots, those of the anti-tobacco movement, specifically the American Lung Association. The author worked for the American Lung Association for nine years but quit after seeing it metamorphose from a responsible public health organization whose atmosphere was somewhat like that of a traditional university into an activists' movement that put him in mind of a "TV ministry," replete with phony claims, exaggerated points of view, bizarre priorities.

For years the anti-tobacco zealots have argued that tobacco is highly addictive, thus a grave menace to innocent Americans. Using methodologically flawed "relapse" studies they claim that tobacco is more addictive than heroin. Yet here, my author makes clear, the comparison is faulty. Tobacco is not illegal. Of course the ex-smoker is more likely to relapse than the ex-heroin user. The costs of going back to using heroin are much graver than going back to tobacco. The heroin user can be locked up and there can be other immediate costs, for instance an overdose.

Another of the specious claims being made by anti-tobacco fanatics is that environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) emanating from a nearby smoker is dangerous to non-smoking healthy adults. Some claim that it is more dangerous to non-smokers than smoke inhaled directly from a cigarette. In fact there is no consensus among members of the scientific community as to the deleteriousness of ETS. There are studies that show it is dangerous and studies that show it is not. A recent report from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is notably misleading. It claims to have reviewed twenty-four ETS studies and concludes that 3,000 or more lung-cancer deaths result from ETS annually. But eighteen of the studies that the EPA claims to have reviewed found no health risk for ETS and three found ETS to be beneficial. (I know, I know, those last three surprised me too. But I read of them in the *New York Times*, so say no more.)

Another example of the flawed reasoning resorted to by the anti-tobacco crowd is the claim that non-smokers sustain the burden of billions of dollars in health costs brought down on society by smokers. The manuscript that I have just read makes it clear that the cost of smoking to American society is a clear wash. Owing to the lower life expectancy of smokers, they take out less from the Social Security system and from their pension plans.

In reading this manuscript I was surprised not only by how far the anti-tobacco zealots have gotten with faulty arguments, but by the range of issues the author felt he had to address in exposing the anti-tobacco fanatics. He argues that the movement threatens free speech and privacy. Moreover, the movement has distorted national health priorities by directing funds away from more pressing health hazards, for instance AIDS research. (Sen. Edward Kennedy, for instance, has a bill before Congress to create a federal institute aimed solely at eliminating tobacco smoking which would cost the taxpayer over $100 million.) He argues convincingly that the movement embraces fanatics willing to follow the same road

*R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. is editor-in-chief of* The American Spectator.

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to violence as certain animal rights activists have followed. The movement has intimidated government agencies and scientists. It has also spread enormous amounts of misinformation: for instance, there is no evidence that tobacco advertising encourages young people to smoke despite all the zealots' claims to the contrary.

Finally the anti-tobacco movement is but one of a dozen movements raising a fairly trivial issue to the level of hysteria and distorting the national agenda. If ETS is a problem, which it probably is not, it is a much less serious indoor air pollution problem than many others. Drug addiction remains a far more serious problem than the "dependence" caused by smoking. Smokers may be hurting themselves, but they are not hurting the rest of us. All of these points and more are lucidly made in the manuscript I have just read. My question is when will it be published, and when will other intelligent books refuting the hysterias of such other zealots as those in the animal rights movement be published? When will a free debate begin on the fanaticisms putting the torch to the Bill of Rights? □

# THE TALKIES

## CANNES ARTISTS

by Bruce Bawer

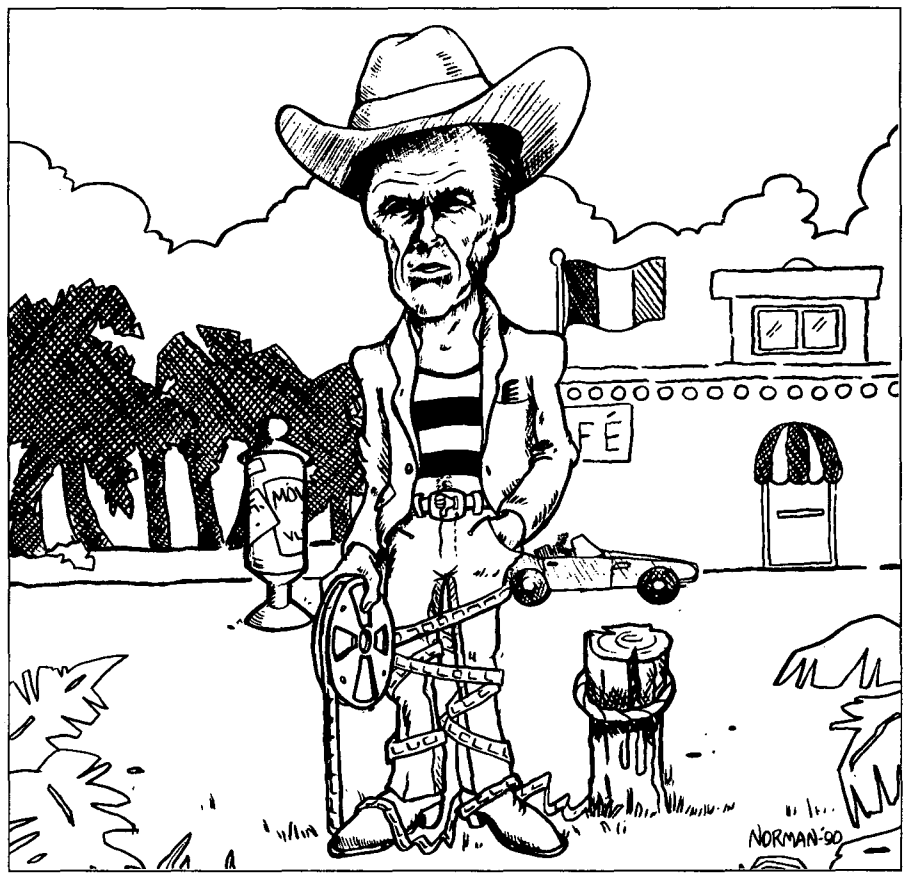
***Thursday, May 10***

This is it: I'm on the plane from New York to Paris, traveling several thousand miles to watch movies for a week.

The Cannes Film Festival is now in its forty-third year, and its prestige has never been greater. To be sure, the festival (which this year runs twelve days) is notorious for rewarding pretension, impenetrability, and gloominess, and for looking warily upon the sanguine, the accessible, the popular; as an editor of France's *Studio* magazine writes, "It is a place where the films that please the public are systematically suspect." In a genre still dominated by America, Cannes is something of an enemy fortress, a stronghold of defiance against Hollywood ways and means. Yes, some stateside movies have won Cannes's top award, the Palme d'Or; but they tend to be movies that offer a dark, seditious vision of American society. Consider the U.S. winners of the last twenty years: *M*A*S*H*; *Taxi Driver*; *Apocalypse Now*; *Missing*; *Paris, Texas*; *sex, lies, and videotape*. Though most of these are worthy films, the list confirms an unmistakable pattern of rewarding U.S. films for being bleak and subversive.

Yet one can't easily dismiss an institution that routinely presents work by the planet's most distinguished directors. This year, alas, there are a few such films that I won't get to see: I'll be arriving several hours too late for the opening picture, Akira Kurosawa's *Dreams*, and leaving several days too early to catch new movies by Godard, Fellini, and David Lynch. But no matter: there'll be plenty to see.

In fact, there'll be altogether too much. As I peruse the list of screenings (or "seances") in *Le Monde*, it all seems quite baroque. First there are the nineteen "official selections" in competition for prizes. Among these are three apiece from France and the U.S., two apiece from Italy and the Soviet Union, and one apiece from Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Poland, China, Japan, Colombia, and Burkina Faso. In addition, there are nine non-competing films that are also considered "official selections." Then there are four "parallel" series, which, though associated with the Festival International du Film, have their own selection committees and juries. These series were founded in the early sixties and afterward, supposedly to exhibit work by filmmakers who are young or "different" or working in obscure corners of the globe; the films in these series that represent directorial debuts are eligible for a prize called the Camera d'Or (which in 1984 went to Jim Jarmusch for *Stranger than Paradise*). This year, the series called "La Semaine International de la Critique" ("Critics' Week") offers seven movies; "La Quinzaine des Realisatures" ("Directors' Fortnight") offers twenty; "Perspectives du Cinema Francais," seven; "Un Certain Regard," seventeen. Then there are several short films. Total: over eighty movies shown under the auspices of the FIF or one of its wings. Add to that the dozens of other films shown in other venues, mainly to prospective distributors, and you've got a veritable torrent of celluloid.




From Paris I fly to Nice, then proceed to Cannes by minibus. The Festival employee at the wheel drives at breakneck speed—upwards of 120 kilometers per hour—as if rushing a shipment of life-saving medicine to a disaster area.

***Friday, May 11***

Cannes is beautiful, despite the hundreds of billboards promoting everyone from Costa Gavras to Arnold Schwarzenegger. The lavish bayfront Palais des Festivals, nerve center of the city, looms like a cathedral. At 8:30 a.m. to the immense Grand Auditorium Lumière at the Palais to see the new Clint Eastwood movie, *White Hunter, Black Heart*. What a shock. The movie has its virtues, but the performance by Eastwood—who also directed and produced—is not among them. As a flamboyant 1950s film director named John Wilson, he's awful. During the first few minutes I keep wondering: Why is he acting as if he can't act? Then I realize: maybe he *can't* act—not in this kind of role, anyway. Meaning, that is, in a talky role that requires him to be something he's not. Peter Viertel (who co-wrote with James Bridges and Burt Kennedy) based his original novel on his experience as a script-polisher for John Huston on *The African Queen*. Here, as in Viertel's novel, Wilson becomes obsessed, soon after arriving in Africa to make the film, with the desire to kill an elephant. Thanks to this obsession, the shoot is held up, its finances imperiled, people's lives endangered: yet Wilson refuses to behave responsibly.

Not a bad idea for a movie. But the scriptwriters have miscalculated: rather

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than adapt their protagonist to Eastwood's laconic style, they have chosen to give him reams of garrulous, Huston-like dialogue. And—equally unwisely—Eastwood has chosen to imitate Huston's characteristic inflections and physical mannerisms, which are miles from his own natural ones. The result is one of the most unsuccessful attempts I've ever seen by a major star to stretch his range.

To make matters worse, the scriptwriters invariably drive home their points in lumbering, one-by-one fashion. Various scenes exist for the sole purpose of showing (a) how much Wilson hates anti-Semitism, (b) how much he hates racism, (c) how much of a ladies' man he is, (d) how much of a man's man he is, (e) how gutsy he is, (f) how much he loves to play practical jokes, (g) how much he loves to shock people, (h) how little he cares about money. As he tells Pete Verill (Jeff Fahey), the sensible, Nick Carraway-like Viertel character, he doesn't think of himself as being in show business, but rather considers himself "a lousy little god" who creates his own worlds without a thought of box-office potential: "To write a movie you must forget that anyone's ever going to see it." Movies, he says, should always reduce life to its fundamental terms: love and death, good and evil.

Eastwood—who, though American and popular, is revered by many European cinéastes as a master of symbolically resonant simplicity—plainly shares most of his character's views; it is clear that he intended this film to be about the elemental mystery of a heroic soul's attraction to sin. But the film falters not only because of Eastwood's acting but because Wilson is simply not the heroic soul that Eastwood thinks he is. Simply put, he's an arrogant, self-dramatizing big shot whom people regard as "bigger than life" because his fame, wealth, and host of tolerant hangers-on make it easy for him to gratify his every asinine impulse. To be sure, in a moment of anger, Pete does call Wilson "the most egocentric, irresponsible son of a bitch I've ever met"; but too often this movie doesn't go along with him, and insists on finding deep spiritual significance in what is merely a celebrity's self-indulgence. At the post-screening press conference, Eastwood avers that he didn't base his performance on Huston (!) and says he shares Wilson's disdain for Hollywood's cautiousness. (*Quel rebelle!*) He discusses Zimbabwe, where the picture was filmed: "You'd never know there'd been a war there. The people were very up." And he fields questions. A Swedish woman complains about the film's females; Eastwood cites his feminist credentials. Another journalist asks if the film's message is partly environmental; Eastwood says that, yes, thanks to environmentalism, Viertel's story has taken on new meaning. This pleases him. It seems to please the press, too: that the movie has a trendy political angle apparently makes for more interesting copy.

In the afternoon I sit through twenty minutes of John Waters's campy *Cry Baby*. Set in a 1950s high school, it's a retread of *Hairspray* without the redeeming presence of Divine: if the earlier movie was dopily funny, this one is just dopey. A delinquent (Johnny Depp) falls for a rich girl (Amy Locane). Now and then he sheds a single tear. This, I gather, is meant to be hilarious. I don't get it. Nor do I understand why this frivolous movie is at Cannes, supposedly a showcase for serious cinema. I suspect it's because Waters mocks the U.S. bourgeoisie and its glory days, and exalts poor folks over rich bigots. Doesn't it matter that his social views are simpleminded and slickly expressed, that his jokes have no wit or moral bite, that he glories in the tawdry and trashy?

At 8:00 p.m., a very different pack of juvenile delinquents. *Rodrigo D: No Futuro* is a Colombian movie about lower-class Medellin teens for whom crime and drugs are a part of daily life and gainful employment and sexual fidelity are alien concepts. With its grittily realistic photography and cast of real-live Medellin JDs, the film feels evocative and authentic. But when it comes to making sociological points (his main goal here), director Victor Manuel Gaviria's touch is about as subtle as that of the heavy-metal music these kids adore. He doesn't move far enough beyond documentary into art: the script (by Gaviria and two others) meanders, repeats itself, and is ultimately boring. One is put off, too, by the press kit's exploitation of the fact that three kids who appear in the film have since died violently.

A quick circuit through the exhibition hall at the Palais. Every film outfit you can name, from Miramax to Sovexportfilms, has a berth here. I'm reminded that Cannes is mostly about people coming from all over the world to unload distribution rights to spaghetti westerns and Kung Fu movies.

***Saturday, May 12***

If *White Hunter, Black Heart* was inspired by John Huston, *Artificial Paradise*—directed by the Yugoslav Karpo Godina and written by Branko Vucicevic—concerns the early life of director Fritz Lang. Like Lang's pictures, it's heavy on stylization: every so often, the actors in realistically rendered scenes will suddenly strike melodramatic poses, deliver their lines in stilted fashion, or die theatrically. It's as if Godina wants to remind us of film's artificiality, its ritualistic function. One character, a magician, keeps saying "hocus-pocus"; the movie continually reminds us of its own magical quality, of the power of film's hocus-pocus to enrich one's conception of the nature of reality.

At one point, Lang (played with wit and authority by Jurgen Morche) asserts that it's foolish to go into the past because "time disorients." Certainly this movie does its best to disorient: its episodes, unchronologically arranged, reach back into Lang's youth and are linked only by the device of a middle-aged Lang, newly arrived in Los Angeles in 1935, relating his biography to a young admirer. These episodes emphasize bizarre and tragic turns in his friends' lives, most of which we're not prepared for. It's an arresting, if not quite coherent, piece of work which, like the Eastwood film, presses upon us its disapproval of Hollywood. Indeed, the endings of both films involve a pointedly ironic implication that true film artistry derives from complex spiritual experience of a sort that cannot flourish within the U.S. studio system. This shared attitude doubtless helps explain the attraction of these two films to those who make the selections here: increasingly, it's clear that nothing appeals to the powers at Cannes quite like a put-down of Hollywood.

Press conference for *Rodrigo D.* Gaviria asserts that the Medellin teens in his movie are "heroes, not criminals" and calls the police "political whores." Nobody challenges him or requests an explanation: radical-sounding statements are taken for granted here. Gaviria says his movie is about the "war" between the kids and the cops—but if there had been more "war" in the picture and less desultory criminality (with no cops in sight), it would have been a lot more dramatically gripping. Two of his "heroes," by the way, flank Gaviria on the dais, and the look in their eyes is frightening: sullen, glazed, unblinking. Mid-conference, one of them gets up and bums a cigarette off somebody offstage. The other has a better idea what's expected of him: "All my friends are dead," he says woodenly. The press seems to love the idea that three actors have died violently; one reporter wants to know all the details, and everyone eagerly takes them down.

In the evening, some welcome comic relief: a screening of Gabriele Salvatores's *Turne*, a sort of Italian counterpart to Doris Dorrie's *Men*. It's about two friends, actors in a troupe that's touring Italy with *The Cherry Orchard*. Federico (Fabrizio Bentivoglio) is aloof and self-absorbed, a melancholic type whose abandonment by his lover Vittoria (Laura Morante) drives him to despair. His only foundation is his friendship with the earthy, extroverted Dario (Diego Abatantuono)—who, unbeknownst to him, has taken up with Vittoria. It's all quite funny (especially a running gag about Federico's inability to remember his lines), though Federico remains something of a closed book throughout and though the film's five writers couldn't come up with an ending; rather than build to a riotous finale, it tapers off, running out of ideas and energy.

Afterwards, I join the huddled masses outside the Palais and look on while hundreds of formally attired *mesdames et messieurs* mount the red-carpeted stairs of the Grand Auditorium Lumière to watch, God help them, *Rodrigo D.* There is a uniformed honor guard, and classical music is playing. Who are these tuxedoed glitterati? Some are obviously American filmmakers, Tokyo movie merchants. Others look far too young, and have that distinct Riviera look: dainty, olive-skinned, *raffiné*. This elegant display could not be more removed from the press screenings, which begin every morning at 8:30 and for which we all show up in T-shirts and shorts. How bizarre that all these dinner-jacketed sophisticates should be lining up for a film celebrating Colombian street gangs.

***Sunday, May 13***

In the morning, Alan Parker's *Come See the Paradise*. What to make of this U.S.-based British writer-director?



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*Shoot the Moon*, about a crumbling marriage between Albert Finney and Diane Keaton, was (despite the boom mike that hung down into several shots) satisfying, because Parker stuck close to home. He's done offbeat films about kids: *Bugsy Malone*, *Fame*, *Birdy*, *Angel Heart*. But his big hits were two political dramas: *Midnight Express* (1977), about an American teen in a Turkish pen, and *Mississippi Burning* (1988), about civil rights workers and Dixie racists. In both movies, Parker assailed social wrongs on which virtually no one would disagree with him —but he used those wrongs as a basis for glib attacks on American mores and on the U.S. political system.

He's up to much the same thing in *Paradise*, a well-edited, too-pretty movie set on the West Coast during the thirties and forties. Jack McGurn (Dennis Quaid), an Irish-born union organizer (without a trace of brogue), marries Lily Kawamura (Tamlyn Tomita), a second-generation Japanese-American, only to be separated from her after Pearl Harbor by her consignment to an internment camp. Everything is spelled out. We know Jack has principles because somebody says "You've got principles." We know Jack adores Lily not because there's chemistry between them (there isn't) but because he keeps telling her so: "They can break both my arms and legs and it could never hurt me as much as losing you, Lily. You have a happiness inside of you that makes you so beautiful, as if you had a little bag of magic that only you could dip into." Yet we don't see her magic, and don't see Jack responding to it. Nonetheless, as if to insist on their passion, Randy Edelman's musical score swells up soppily at each of their dozen-odd parting and reunion scenes. Equally insistent is Michael Seresin's romantic, softly lit photography. (Seresin never misses a chance to shoot the lovers in the vicinity of a sunbeam penetrating a haze of dust.)

At times, the movie recalls an aggressively sentimental AT&T commercial. And one of the things it sentimentalizes is Depression-era leftist radicalism—as if the whole experience of the thirties (and of 1989) hadn't taught us anything. It's a puerile movie, and it makes one conclude that if Parker's kid pictures are better than his political films, it's because he has a childlike mentality. His politics are at the level of protest music lyrics (it's no surprise that he directed *Pink Floyd: The Wall*); he manifestly understands history in terms of sentimental-liberal clichés. It puts *Paradise* in perspective to see it in Provence, where fifty years ago the Vichy government was helping ship Jews off to camps—and not detention camps, either.

Interestingly, at the post-screening press conference, Parker pretty much admits his puerility—and does so with an odd populistic pride: "I'm pretty happy with how simpleminded I am." He says that *Paradise* is "much softer in attitude than some of my previous films"—and he's right; he's tempered his shrillness. ("I'm getting older and more subtle," he suggests.) As Eastwood claims not to have imitated Huston, so Parker insists that "I don't intentionally make controversial films." Yet he congratulates himself on them: "Most American directors are not interested in a movie with some political backbone. I'm different from them because I'm not an American, and can step outside a situation and see it with a little more clarity."

The questions are predictable. "How much do you feel constrained by commercial pressures?" someone asks Parker. The three Japanese-American actors on the panel are asked whether there is an "increase in xenophobia in America toward Asian-American actors." (It's obvious none of them knows what xenophobia means, but they try to answer anyway.) Another reporter wonders if the film is meant as an indirect comment on today's "economic racism" against the Japanese. (Parker: "No.") The man from *Variety* begins his question: "Given the arch-conservative climate in America right now . . . " And a European wonders why the "racist scenes are somewhat weak"—meaning that Parker doesn't show enough violent acts against Japanese-Americans. Parker's reply: there *weren't* that many such acts. Compared to the press, he comes off as a voice of sanity and moderation.

In the afternoon twenty-six small planes circle over the Bay of Cannes, towing a set of banners announcing that anyone interested in distribution rights to *Superman: The New Movie* should head for the Carlton, suite 643. Why not just call it *Superman V*? Because then everyone would be reminded what bombs *III* and *IV* were.

Later, a cryptic 18-minute Soviet film, *Inoi* by Sergei Masloboichtchikov. (Try to fit *that* on a marquee.) It's recognizably Russian in its grimness: the weather is gray, and the protagonist is in prison, harassed by a grotesque fellow inmate. The glasnost difference? The star is strikingly handsome, and is shot throughout (often barechested) in fashion-magazine poses, with lighting and photography to match. *GQ* goes to the Gulag.

After *Inoi*, a surprisingly polished Czechoslovakian comedy, *Cas Sluhu*, whose French title is *Le Temps des Larbins*. (I look up *larbin*: "flunky.") Like *Turne*, it's a study in romantic fixation and betrayal. Dumped by her beau, a neurotic young Prague woman named Dana (Ivana Chylkova) cajoles a friend's docile boyfriend, Milan (Karel Roden), into marriage. She ends up living very well, with a maid, a car, and a regular schedule of dinner parties. Yet she's unsatisfied—and thoroughly ungrateful to Milan, whom she tortures with sadistic mind games and ultimately betrays. It's a fine film—its tone just right, its psychology convincing. And Miss Chylkova is first-rate: though her character might have come off as completely unsympathetic, she makes one pity Dana even as one laughs at her frantic, flagrant selfishness. It's a part you could see a young Shirley MacLaine playing.

***Monday, May 14***

At 8:30 a.m. to Bertrand Tavernier's *Daddy Nostalgie*. The story is simple: after a heart attack, the elderly Daddy (Dirk Bogarde), English by birth, returns from the hospital to his Côté d'Azur villa and his tight-lipped French wife, Miche (Odette Laure), to whom he complains: "You never speak English to me anymore." Knowing that his days are numbered, his middle-aged daughter Carolyn (Jane Birkin), a screenwriter, comes down from Paris for a few days. The film chronicles her visit with intelligence and compassion, splendidly capturing the rhythms of the family's lives and the textures of their relationships. (It's appropriate that we see Daddy reading *To the Lighthouse*, a novel that does much the same thing for another seaside family.)

Daddy and Carolyn make an interesting pair. He exudes a tired, gentle elegance, rather reminding one of Herbert Marshall in a Somerset Maugham movie. Carolyn is high-strung, easily hurt, and fearful of responsibility; she has a child's desperate need to know whether Daddy still loves her mother (the household bilingualism serves as an apt symbol of their marital near-estrangement), and her memory of his neglect during her childhood still stings. "I don't give a damn about your great beautiful life," Carolyn snaps when he waxes nostalgic. "It's a beautiful selfish life." Yet mostly they're simpatico. Daddy observes that they share "a great talent for life," and warns her that "the sweetness of life is terribly perishable." She tells him he was a "ghastly" father, but adds: "You make me laugh—and dream."

A promising setup. But Tavernier (*A Sunday in the Country*, *Round Midnight*) doesn't do enough with it. After a certain point the film doesn't go anywhere or change pitch; there's simply not enough drama. The particulars, too, often seem arbitrary. Daddy shows Carolyn a villa (in Cannes!) and tells her a story about it; it's a nice scene, but doesn't resonate with anything else or advance the plot. The film closes with one of my favorite songs, "These Foolish Things," and the rendition by Birkin's untrained voice has an extremely sweet quality. But its use here is thoroughly sentimental: Tavernier is trying to force a degree and kind of emotion on the film that it hasn't earned—and, for that


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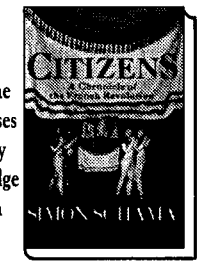


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matter, hasn't seemed to be aiming for.

Flaws notwithstanding, though, I'd see *Daddy Nostalgie* again in a minute. It's a human film—honest, wise, serious. Denis Lenoir's cinematography is breathtaking; the beautiful soft lighting and muted orange-and-blue Côté d'Azur palette are utterly appropriate to the film's gentle, pensive tone. And the performances are marvelously sensitive and discerning: Jane Birkin, who's familiar to French audiences but almost unknown in the U.S., is very touching as the brittle, ardent Carolyn; Dirk Bogarde does a masterly job of capturing Daddy's sad, remote dignity, his spiritual and physical fragility, his matter-of-fact egoism and his quiet air of regret.

The press conference for *Daddy Nostalgie* proves to be the most literate and lively thus far, and the most free of political cant. The movie's ensemble feeling carries over. Tavernier says it's about a failure who "discovers through his daughter what he'd lost." But this seems to be claiming too much.

At 2:30 to the English director Ken Murray's *1871*. Ghastly. I walk out after about a half hour, and I'm not the first to do so.

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***Tuesday, May 15***

Reading Cannes pieces in several French publications, I notice that the word *Americain* generally carries with it an automatic sneer. Interesting footnote: Maurice Huleu, reviewing *Daddy Nostalgie* in *Nice-Matin*, writes that Bogarde is "right out of a Somerset Maugham novel."

Today's morning film: *Night Sun*, a remarkable work directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, whose *Padre Padrone* won the Palme d'Or in 1977. The new film, based on Tolstoy's story "Father Sergius," concerns a virtuous young baron (Julian Sands) who, upon learning that his fiancée was the czar's mistress, becomes a monk, then a hermit. He struggles against fleshly temptations; yet in his proud aloofness he is guilty of vanity, learning ultimately that service to God demands not isolation from but involvement with mankind. Ironically, the movie itself keeps a certain distance from its subject. Yet it's a thoughtful film, dignified and deliberate; there's a nice symmetry, too, to the trinity of temptresses (Nastassja Kinski, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Patricia Millardet) whose brushes with Sergius drive him, step by step, from human contact. Appropriately, the color is lush, the lighting radiant, the camerawork stately (no jerky movements, no abrupt cuts): the Tavianis render church, palace, and nature alike as holy places, as if to repudiate Sergius's Spartan outlook, his concentration on otherworldly things. At the press conference afterwards, the Tavianis justly describe the film as a brief for "religion without religiosity," for faith in what takes place between people, for recognition of the miracle of love and the mystery in all things. Funny to hear all this talk of fates and love and humility while photographers crowd the dais, shoving past each other to get a good shot of Nastassja Kinski.

Later, at a sidewalk cafe, I overhear three Ivy Leaguers. Turns out they're earning college credit by attending screenings here.

***Wednesday, May 16***

On the flight back to New York I plunk down my twenty francs and watch *Back to the Future, Part Two*. Its production values make, say, *Rodrigo D.* look primitive. Yet, compared to films like *Daddy Nostalgie* and *Night Sun*, how slick it seems, how spiritually hollow—all special effects and no human content to speak of. Are the French right, then, about American movies? No, not so long as a *Driving Miss Daisy* can get made and become a hit. This thought comforts me. I fall asleep about half an hour into the picture and awaken to find the window shades up and the sun streaming in. ☐



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# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE YEARS OF LYNDON JOHNSON: MEANS OF ASCENT

Robert A. Caro/Alfred A. Knopf/506 pp. $24.95

Victor Gold

Shrewdly, knowing I worked for Barry Goldwater in his 1964 presidential campaign, the editor asked if I'd review the latest Caro volume on the life of Lyndon Johnson. Not so shrewdly, I said yes, anticipating the prospect of ignoring the book and going after the subject.

Having read *The Path to Power*, Caro's first volume on Johnson, I should have been forewarned. As the biographer who dismembered the reputation of Robert Moses, Caro is a favored literary ward of the New York reading public, which means that long before an outland reviewer even gets his copy of a Caro book a verdict will already have been rendered by the critic of the *Times*, with the book established on the bestseller list. (There is nothing so futile as a reviewer's railing against the quality of a book whose author is counting his money.)

But more important, as it developed, the further I got into *Means of Ascent*, the more I realized, with growing horror, that Caro, in his frenzy to do for Lyndon Johnson's place in history what he did for Robert Moses's, was stripping me, page by page, of a long-cherished conviction that Johnson was an unmitigated expletive. Who could have imagined that anyone who went down in flames with Barry Goldwater in 1964 would read a book on Lyndon Johnson and end up sympathizing with the man?

To the point, not since Trotsky's *Stalin* has there been a more bilious biography of a world leader. Trotsky had his reasons; but what are we to make of Robert Caro's relentless campaign to transmogrify Johnson's life into a monstrous metaphor for all he (and his generation) finds execrable in American politics?

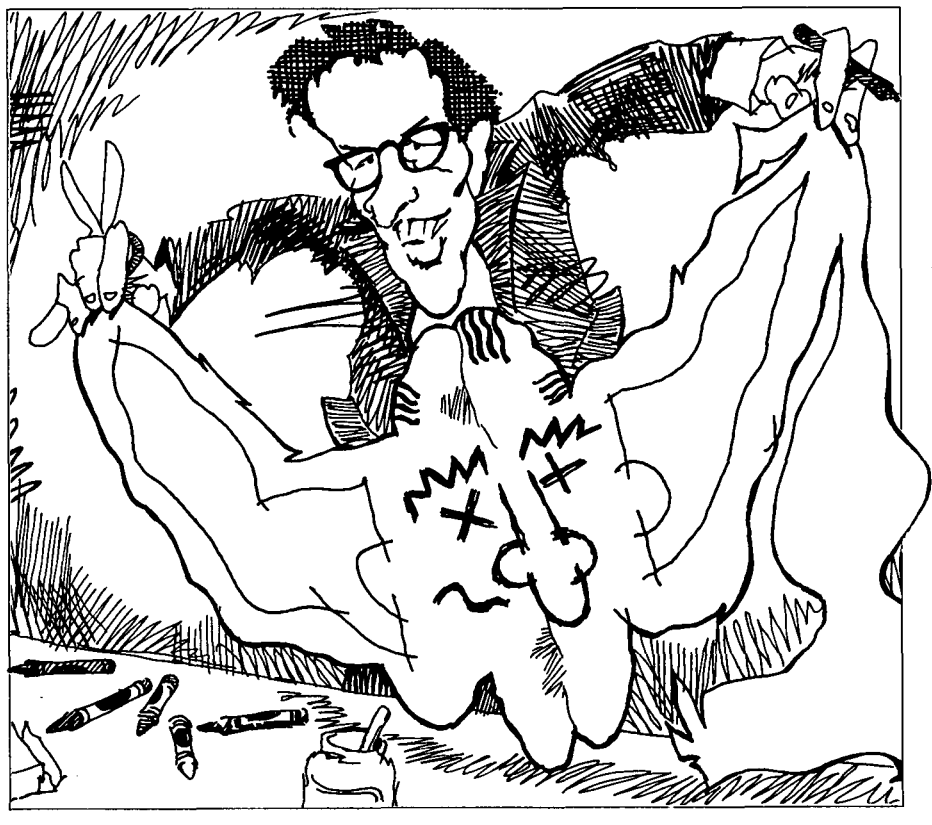
Would you believe, for example, that Johnson's conduct of his office—particularly of "the ugly war that consumed him"—was so despicable that the American people's trust in the presidency was "tarnished" not for a decade nor even a quarter-century, but "forever"? Or that he "shredded"—a shift in metaphorical gears here, from rust to Texas chain saws—the "crucial fabric of credence and faith between the people of the United States" and their President?

When, how, did this happen? My own guess—assuming I accepted Caro's bleak premise—would be sometime between the day Woodrow Wilson lied about keeping us out of World War I, and the day the editors of the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* decided that if, by God, *they* couldn't approve of a President *nobody* was going to approve of him.

I, however, am a diffident judge of history, given to grays, whereas Robert Caro is gifted with blinding perceptions of black and white that even Garry Wills must envy. Pinpointing the precise moment of the shredding of the American presidency, Caro writes: "Until the day of Kennedy's death—until, in other words, the day Johnson took office—the fabric was whole." Then, quoting his friend, the estimable historian Tom Wicker, Caro (with a happy crocodile's "note of sadness") concludes that "the tragic irony of Lyndon Johnson is that the lowering of the presidency, not the Great Society of which he dreamed, is his most obvious legacy."

Obvious to whom? Again, if the topic of choice is to be "the lowering of the presidency," I might date it as sometime between the 1948 whistle-stop appearance in which Harry Truman compared his opponent to Hitler and Mussolini (on his own, mind you, without the aid of George Bush's "negative campaign" handlers), and the moment when John F. Kennedy, having raised expectations as to what he would do as President, settled for elevated rhetoric after the Bay of Pigs and the building of the Berlin Wall.

None of which, by any means, is to find Lyndon Johnson's presidential legacy anything to write an admiring biography about; only to say that when the subject of a biography is pole-axed in the Introduction, before the reader even gets into Chapter One, unless the subject happens to be Stalin, Hitler, or Mussolini, I begin to have qualms about the biographer's obvious impatience to have at it.



Robert Caro, to be sure, is a biographer in a hurry to have at Lyndon Johnson; also a writer who, once his target has been chosen, isn't given to quarter. Hyperbole is his stylistic metier, as in choice phrases like "utter ruthlessness" and "seemingly bottomless capacity for *deceit, deception* and betrayal" (emphasis mine; apparently Caro, unable to decide which synonym best fit Johnson's bill, said to hell with it and opted for both).

*Means of Ascent* is the second of four projected Caro volumes on Johnson's life, and a large, Texas-sized life it was; which makes it difficult—or would, for a less driven biographer—to explain why one-fourth of the Johnson story should be devoted to a single election campaign, even one so storied as LBJ's 87-vote "landslide" victory in the Democratic Senate primary of 1948. This is how Caro explains it:

> That campaign raises, in fact, one of the greatest issues invoked by the life of Lyndon Baines Johnson: the relationship between means and ends. . . . Many of the ends of Lyndon Johnson's life—civil rights in particular, perhaps, but others, too—were noble. . . . Those noble ends, however, would not have been possible were it not for the means, far from noble, which brought Lyndon Johnson to power . . .

Oh, really? On reading breathtaking passages like that, an observer who recalls John F. Kennedy's "landslide" Illinois victory in the 1960 presidential campaign is tempted to ask whether Caro applies the same elevated standard of means and ends across the political board.

I doubt it, and what's more, I don't think he gives this inconsistency a moment's thought. There is a disingenuous quality in Caro's approach to journalism and biography, whether in conning Johnson's friends into confiding in him ("I really want to be fair, and you knew the man better than anyone . . . "), or conning the reader into accepting his ersatz metaphors and double-standard political morality. Does Caro *really* believe that Johnson's 1948 opponent, the small-bore statehouse shuffler Coke Stevenson, was a sagebrush Pericles, "the living personification of frontier individualism . . . the very embodiment of the myth of the cowboy"? Was he *truly* shocked to learn that the vote in Duval County, Texas, was rigged for Lyndon Johnson in 1948?

If so, the author of *Means of Ascent*

*Victor Gold is* The American Spectator*'s national correspondent.*



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is either too dumb to be writing political biographies for adults, or—considering that he devoted years of investigation into proving what everybody from Austin to Boston has known about Johnson's victory for forty years—more the hot-eyed polemicist than the appraising historian.

Did I say too dumb to be writing political biographies? Look who's talking. For this review I get (1) a copy of the book; (2) a small stipend, in the low three figures; and (3) what latter-day psychologists are given to calling *conflicted signals* (a prelude to dyspepsia) in my *attitudinal disposition* toward Lyndon Johnson. And Robert Caro? The verdict was in, before I laid hands on his book. Two volumes down, two to go, and he's smirking all the way to the counting house. □

## MEN AT WORK: THE CRAFT OF BASEBALL

George F. Will/Macmillan/353 pp. $19.95

Robert D. Novak

Why would George Will, the stylish and profound commentator and columnist, write a book about baseball? The way his none too friendly colleagues in Washington have answered this question—that he wants to show he is a good old boy after all—reaffirms for all who doubted that the nation's capital is a nasty place.

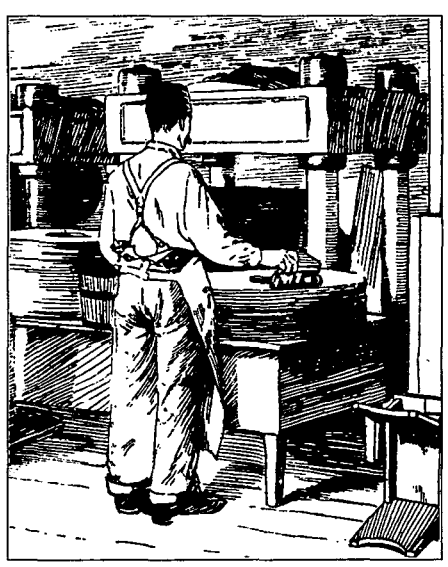
Will's own answer is forthright: "My interest in writing this book has been to have fun exploring the spirit and practice of something fun, a sport." Part of the fun was touring America's baseball parks in the summer of 1989 while carrying on his regular workload without anybody knowing what he was up to.

The product is a delightful book that has won uniformly favorable, if sometimes grudging, reviews. Critics who came to bury Will stayed to express surprise. My favorite is novelist Mark Harris, a baseball fan, Nixon-basher, and unreconstructed liberal. "Since I had heard that he was a committed political conservative," Harris wrote in the *Washington Times*, "I approached his book with a prejudice against him, but I do very much like his book." Reviewers who are also journalists praise Will for his reportorial talents, but then turn mean and say he ought to put as much care and effort into his reporting of national affairs.

Although he never covered the police beat, Will in truth is both a stylist and a dogged gatherer of facts, whether about arms control or pitching control. I admit to a double bias. First, I like George Will, even if I cannot share his misguided views about the economy and government. Second, I have been a baseball fan since 1938 when at age seven I was deluded into thinking that the Cubs' winning a September pennant came naturally.

An affinity for baseball would seem required for this book, its Number One position on the *New York Times* bestseller list suggesting that the grand old game is still the National Pastime. *Men at Work* might more properly be titled "Inside Baseball," delving into strategies and tactics that have not been discussed in print or electronic journalism. It taught me, a lifelong baseball fan, things I never dreamed of. The book's odd title is based on Will's contention about his protagonists that "their work is a game that men play, but they do not play at." In taking what he calls an "anti-romantic" look at baseball, he stresses the "small and boring and cumulatively stressful and draining things" that make a successful player.

It is, Will insists, not the drippy pastoral game often apotheosized. He quotes Houston pitcher Mike Scott as saying, "You've got to put a little fear in there." Will concludes that the fear factor is "more important in baseball than in any other sport." That was reassuring to me, after wondering for years whether my courage was suspect when, as an untalented Junior American Legion player forty-three summers ago, I nearly died of fright while awaiting the southpaw delivery of an adolescent fast-baller.



While purposely engendering fear, the pitcher subjects his own body to exquisite tortures unimaginable in football or hockey. "Throwing a baseball is a highly unnatural act," Will writes. "As the arm accelerates past the ear, it gains terrific speed and then changes direction, turning down and decelerating sharply. Muscles stretch and tear and bleed. And that is when everything is going well."

Will's paragons of a sport that "you can not play with your teeth clenched [or] . . . with your mind idling in neutral" are a manager (Oakland's Tony La Russa), a pitcher (Los Angeles's Orel Hershiser), a hitter (San Diego's Tony Gwynn), and a fielder (Baltimore's Cal Ripken, Jr.). The after-publication fate of two of these heroes demonstrates the inconstancy of baseball fortune. The workaholic Gwynn began this season grossly overweight and Hershiser's repeated performance of "a highly unnatural" act has ruined his rotator cuff and maybe his career.

Will travels from his four heroes across today's baseball landscape and back through its history. He does not play the Tory. His concluding chapter begins with a quote from a former manager and player that "baseball today is not what it should be" because players—"getting paid big money"—"do not try to learn all the fine points of the game as in the days of old, but simply try to get by." This appeared in the *Spalding Base Ball Guide* of 1916.

Will suggests baseball is better than ever. Wee Willie Keeler won entry to the Hall of Fame by "hitting them where they ain't" only because the fielders of ninety years ago weren't where they should have been. "They did not know better," says Will, an astute critic of defensive positioning.

He does mourn for the strong-armed pitchers of yesteryear. But they were using a cuffed and dirty ball kept in the game to save pennies, throwing fewer than 100 pitches a game instead of the 130 to 140 required today thanks to picky hitters. When the immortal Grover Cleveland Alexander pitched thirty-eight complete games in 1916, Will notes, he not only threw forty fewer pitches a game than he would today, but many of them "were fat and slow, allowing weak hitters to dribble the dead (and gray and battered) ball at fielders."

Will reverses the trend of applying sports analogies to politics that began with Teddy Roosevelt and culminated with Richard Nixon and his successors. An example: "A wit once said that it was not true that Gladstone lacked a sense of humor—Gladstone just was not in a mood to be amused. La Russa is no stranger to laughter, but he does not often laugh when he is within a fly ball's distance of a ballpark." Another example: "Not since Cromwell's troops, their puritan sensibilities offended by beauty, went around smashing decorative art in churches has there been an act of folly comparable to the abandonment and destruction of Forbes Field, the Pirates' home for generations."

For the most part, though, Will checks his erudition at the door. This is a book about baseball. Only at the end does he say he cannot "forebear drawing a lesson" from baseball by deploring "a tendency of Americans to demand too little of themselves at their lathes, their desks, their computer terminals." His conclusion: "If Americans made goods and services the way Ripken makes double plays, Gwynn makes hits, Hershiser makes pitches and La Russa makes decisions, you would hear no more about the nation's trajectory having passed its apogee."

But Will is looking at the best of the brightest, the elite of the tiny fraction that makes it to the Majors. If Will had sought out the best lathe operators, secretaries, and computer operators, I'm sure he would have found the same diligence. George Will is himself a "Man at Work," reflecting a work ethic that his pygmy detractors in journalism would do well to emulate.

Earlier, Will mounts the soapbox to decry the use of aluminum bats in college baseball, both for aesthetic reasons (the bat striking a baseball "makes a sound as distressing as that of fingernails scraping a blackboard") and for debasing the game at the level where many future Major Leaguers are trained. Will's suggestion that the Majors let loose some of their billions to subsidize wooden bats in college is laudatory.

My only quibble is that having turned his skills as political philosopher to the debate over the Designated Hitter, he says "I have gotten nowhere" in deciding who is correct. As much as I admire Dr. Will, he is not without fault—in maintaining that Americans are undertaxed, and in becoming an agnostic about the wretched DH. But as he writes, baseball is a "game of failure." Meanwhile, his batting average remains spectacularly high. □

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*Robert D. Novak is a syndicated columnist, a television commentator, and the publisher of the* Evans and Novak Political Report.



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## A MIRACLE, A UNIVERSE: SETTLING ACCOUNTS WITH TORTURERS

Lawrence Weschler/Pantheon Books/292 pp. $22.95

Christopher Caldwell

*New Yorker* staff writer Lawrence Weschler has written several books on modern art and one on Solidarity. His art essays are not so much about art criticism as about some of the weirdos who inhabit the international art world, like the American painter who paints nothing but pound notes, and then spends them. *The Passion of Poland* is less about the Solidarity movement than about the atavism and romantic insanity that led a small workers' movement to triumph over the most heavily armed empire in the history of the world. Weschler is at home with people whom one might reasonably ask, "Why in God's name are you *doing* this?" As such, torturers—and those who stand up to them with nothing but their convictions—have found their chronicler. Here, Weschler limits himself to Brazil and Uruguay to show how torture was executed and expunged under two vastly different sets of circumstances.

Brazil's descent into the maelstrom began in April 1964, when a military coup overthrew the government of João Goulart. This was in the period when Brazil was raking in money hand-over-fist both through foreign loans and consequent industrialization, which left the country with some of the world's highest skyscrapers and some of the world's highest external debts. Goulart, with his zeal for wage reform and nationalization of industries, endangered Brazil's credit line, and had to go. Throughout the sixties and seventies, the Brazilian military would take any measure—including torture—to protect the country's prosperity. In the late seventies, the military governments of generals Ernesto Geisel and João Baptista Figueiredo, for the first time finding their credit linked to their human rights record, tried to liberalize the regime gradually, beginning with a *distensao* (relaxation) and culminating in an *abertura* (opening) under the Figueiredo government.

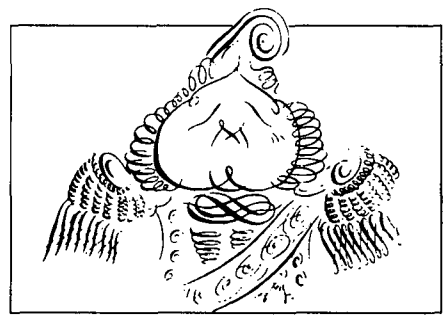
Weschler's account of the period centers on the *Brasil: Nunca Mais* (Never Again) project, the brainchild of Sao Paulo's Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns and Brazilian missionary Jaime Wright (whose brother was "disappeared" in 1973 for leading Christian student activists in political protests). With the help of the Rev. Philip Potter, a gigantic West Indian who risked his job as head of the World Council of Churches to provide $350,000 in clandestine aid, Wright and Arns created a scam worthy of a Len Deighton thriller. Under the terms of an edict handed down during Figueiredo's *abertura*, an amnesty would be offered to both "political criminals" and human rights violators. But the military weren't taking any chances: lawyers were hired to defend the embroiled officers, and allowed overnight access to the government's torture files. This is where it gets interesting.

Wright and Arns established a bogus business-services company in a Brasilia office building and bought three copying machines. With the help of sympathetic lawyers, they set to work copying and cross-referencing every case of torture on government record. Because of the risk of leaks, many of the lower-level staff were not even told what they were working on, and most didn't figure it out until *Brasil: Nunca Mais* was whittled down from a million pages of documents and published in book form.

How could the generals have been so stupid as to leave all this evidence lying around? Brazilians can be proud of some of their military "achievements": they are still the world's fourth-largest arms exporter. They do, however, have a tendency toward excessive zeal: one prominent torturer, a navy lieutenant commander from a long line of officers, was christened with the rather un-Brazilian name of Hitler de Oliveira Mota. "Like the Nazis," one Brazilian tells Weschler, "they imagined that they were laying the groundwork for a civilization that would last a thousand years —that, far from having to justify themselves for occasional lapses, they would be celebrated by all posterity for the breadth of their achievement." All this took place during the foreign-lending orgy and concomitant economic boom known as the "Brazilian miracle."

In Uruguay, by contrast, the torture state was built on economic collapse, which Weschler traces to "import substitution industrialization" (ISI), a policy that successive postwar Uruguayan governments followed assiduously. Basically, ISI is a temporary ("until our infrastructure is developed") protectionism backed up by Third World rhetoric. High tariffs created ridiculous profit windows for industrialists, who had a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Prices soared, purchasing power plummeted, and Uruguay found itself saddled with a program about as "temporary" as affirmative action. Unions radicalized. Students went crazy. The idea was so stupid that the army had to be called in to enforce it. And South America's most prosperous nation, the "Great Democratic Exception," found itself the newest of Third World countries.

Weschler admires the Tupamaro guerrillas, left-wing university students who about this time organized around charismatic law-school dropout Raul Sendic, and it's hard not to share his enthusiasm for these "antic insurrectionists," this "marriage of Chaplin and Che." But in 1970, just as the military was reaching peak size and influence, they made a big mistake by kidnapping U.S. AID official Dan Mitrione, whom they accused of teaching torture methods to officers. When the government of Jorge Pacheco Areco refused to exchange several Tupa prisoners for the American, the Tupas shot Mitrione to death. They then began to engage in terrorism on a large scale, and the government answered in kind: Uruguay soon had the highest rate of civilian incarceration of any country where such things were documented.



While not as accomplished as the Brazilians at physical depredations, the Uruguayan regime added sophisticated psychological ones. The Uruguayan section of the book is twice as long as the one on Brazil, and descriptions of torture techniques are more elaborate. One wishes they weren't. A pianist has his fingers chain sawed. A four-year-old is forced to walk around a torture complex alone in search of his father; he finds him tied up in a hood. Another prisoner lives at the bottom of a well for weeks. Another survives on a diet of urine. And there is plenty of unmentionable sex. Some prisoners claim to have been tortured by men with Argentine accents during that country's *guerra sucia*, or "dirty war," making it plausible that there was something resembling an international torture *club* operating in the southern cone over the past two decades.

If Weschler believes in such a club, there's scant doubt who he thinks its founding member was. He's a liberal of a recognizable stripe, with little good to say about American policy in Latin America and few North American heroes, save Jimmy Carter and the late Penny Lernoux. The "doctrine of national security" is a hobbyhorse that Weschler rides at a gallop; according to his reading, Washington inflicted its phobia of Communist infiltration on various Latin American governments in the decades following the Second World War, leading to internal repression and the tortures of the sixties, seventies, and eighties. Even if there was such a doctrine (and a policy is not a "doctrine"), to blame the U.S. implies a Latin American inability to form homegrown institutions and policies, and borders on condescension. One almost expects Weschler to add that the U.S. invented *cumbia*, cockfighting, and *caudillismo*.

For Weschler, the key issue in dismantling a torture state is the amnesty that the torturers are generally in a position to demand for themselves. Weschler does not argue that amnesties are necessarily bad, but he has a keen sense of how forgiveness can degenerate into forgetfulness, making future thug states more viable. The new ultra-left government of Luis Lacalle in Uruguay and the center-right Collor de Mello government in Brazil, both democratically elected, have failed to resuscitate their ravaged economies. In neither country has anyone been punished for torture, which is precisely Weschler's point: torture is not a policy but a symptom of societal sickness, and it can take societies as long to recover from these *guerras sucias* as it can the individual victims. Democracy is only a precondition; few people run marathons the day after quitting smoking.

Had he waited a bit longer, Weschler could have examined torture in Panama or Chile, but it's hard to find fault with his choice of countries. One of his charms as a writer is that he sticks to a subject like a terrier to a trouser leg, even after he's got a book and several articles out of it; he continues to write on Poland and on the perpetual freakshow that is the international art world. One hopes to read more from him on the subject of torture, particularly if he's able to treat the collapse of left-wing torture states like Rumania and—who knows when?—Cuba with the same acuity and outrage he brings to these two right-wing baddies. □

*Christopher Caldwell is a writer living in Washington, D.C.*



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## SOVIET WOMEN: WALKING THE TIGHTROPE

Francine du Plessix Gray/Doubleday/213 pp. $19.95

Elizabeth Kristol

In his 1864 novel *What Is to Be Done?* the Russian utopian socialist N. G. Chernyshevsky set out to depict the ideal marriage between an enlightened "new man" and "new woman" of the future: husband and wife would occupy separate living quarters, shun all sexual contact, and confine their intercourse (social, that is) to a mutually agreed-upon "neutral" room.

If *Soviet Women: Walking the Tightrope* is any indication, the Russian dream has changed little over the years. The two main goals held in common by the women interviewed by Francine du Plessix Gray seem to be: (1) avoiding sex with Russian men, and (2) acquiring an apartment that has more than two rooms.

*Soviet Women* is a loosely knit collection of vignettes and interviews, spanning the novelist's travels from Moscow through Latvia, Leningrad, Georgia, Uzbekistan, and Siberia. We meet a few party members, a few industrial workers, but primarily artists and intellectuals. This imbalance is predictable (although it would have been nice if the author had made an effort to correct it) given Gray's upbringing in Paris by her Russian mother in what we may assume was a relatively privileged setting.

The appeal of *Soviet Women* is also its drawback. The book's reporter's-notebook format makes for breezy reading, but the lack of any counterbalancing research or scholarship results in information that is at times dubious. There are no attempts to verify any of the assertions made in the course of the interviews, or to examine the extent to which it is safe to generalize from individual experiences. Ideally, every interview should be taken with a large grain of salt, a task beyond the powers of the average American reader who has never set foot in the Soviet Union.

*Elizabeth Kristol is associate editor at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.*

Certain impressions seem beyond dispute—for example, that a Soviet woman's lot is not a very happy one (but then again, neither is a Soviet man's). According to one estimate Gray provides, the typical Soviet mother spends forty hours a week on shopping, cooking, and cleaning. Shopping alone is an aerobic exercise of dashing from store to store in search of basic necessities, followed by a cooling-down period of waiting on long lines. Since clothes are expensive and of poor quality, many women sew their family's clothing themselves. The overcrowded state-run child-care system is, according to the women Gray spoke with, a breeding ground for illnesses, forcing mothers either to take time off from work to tend to their sick children—thus jeopardizing their chances for promotion—or to stay at home and forfeit badly needed income.

This is all believable enough. Other anecdotal material—presented without disclaimer—is more difficult to evaluate. Is it true that the Soviet Union is awash in Pepsi-Cola and blue jeans, but hasn't yet discovered the tampon? Is it true that, among the educated elite of Leningrad, the most common form of "birth control" consists of leaping off an icebox when one's period is three days late? Is it true that the maternity wards of Soviet hospitals prohibit husbands from visiting their wives and newborns, on the grounds that Soviet women won't let their husbands see them without proper makeup and hairstyling?

Some of the incidents recounted are significant even if they should prove to be the rare exception to the norm. The worst offenders in this category involve contraceptives. According to Gray, the most widely prescribed contraceptive device in the Soviet Union is the notoriously injurious spiral IUD. When Gray raised concerns about this with the head doctor (and Communist party apparatchik) of a maternity clinic in Uzbekistan, she received the appalling response: "In my clinic *every* single woman can get to use the spiral," boasted the doctor. "If her cervix gets inflamed, we heal it and put the spiral right back in. If it causes cysts, we operate on them, and then back in with the spiral. We can fix *any* contraindication." With options such as this, it would make sense that only five percent of the Soviet population uses birth control.

The birth control of last resort has always been abortion, and it has been common knowledge for some time now that abortion is rampant in the Soviet Union. Gray interviewed many women who had already had seven or eight abortions, and calmly spoke of expecting to have two or three more before their childbearing years are over. According to the Soviet Ministry of Health's figures, which include only legal abortions, there are two to three abortions for every birth in the Soviet Union; when illegal abortions are taken into account, the ratio jumps to five to eight abortions for every birth. Many of those illegal abortions result in the mother's death.

Suffice it to say that all these conditions, taken together, are not conducive to love and romance. And indeed the women Gray interviewed are unanimous in finding themselves simply too weary to care much about men—creatures who, for all their charms, also manage to impose an additional set of demands. This weariness is compounded by the disdain Soviet women evidence for the actual men in their lives. (Female) readers will be particularly amused to learn that Soviet women idolize American men as paragons of chivalry. One Soviet visitor to the U.S. expressed her wonder: "Their constant smile, their gallantry—that was the most amazing and impressive part of my trip. In the streets, in their homes, as soon as they feel you mightn't like something, they say 'excuse me. . . .' In comparison, our men's manners are constantly, uncouthly rude." Thus the hunt for American-type *dzhentlemen*. When those can't be found, a Soviet of European origin will do; anything, it seems, but a pure-bred Russian.

Many of the women Gray spoke with (of the *intelligentsia*, that is) have managed to channel their frustrations and dreams into fashion, and the chapter entitled "Why They Dress Up" is the most fascinating section of the book. Gray is bewildered by the women's near-obsession—especially given their lack of leisure time and discretionary income—with the minutiae of hairstyling, makeup, and clothing. She is further confused when she innocently asks them if they are prettying themselves for the men in their lives and watches them explode in laughter. "For *men*!" one exclaims. "Do you think they ever get out of their selfish little brains to notice what we wear? . . . No, no, you see," the woman continues, pirouetting in her new outfit, "life is bleak, and this is one of the few inner joys I can buy, and the girls at work . . . *they* will be so impressed." Fashion is the stimulant of choice in a country that seems to do everything it can to sap the spirit. As one woman puts it: "Everything about us is as drab as our apartment houses. . . . So decorating your outer surface is like bringing flowers inside of you, it's your only way of cheering up."

The plight of Soviet women dismays Gray as much for reasons of ideology as compassion. She has a stake, it turns

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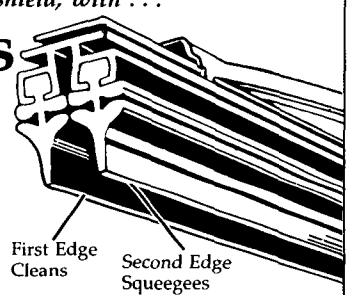


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out, in the ideals of the Russian Revolution, and is shocked to discover discrepancies between its original goals and the contemporary state of affairs in the Soviet Union. How can this be? "For upon the Revolution of 1917, the Bolshevik regime became the first government in history to declare women's emancipation as one of its primary goals, and it inscribed it into its constitution. Laws ensuring equal pay for equal work—akin to our doomed Equal Rights Amendment—were instantly effected. And women's right (if not their obligation) to work became central to Soviet notions of citizenship."

Gray speculates as to what went wrong and concludes that, after the Revolution, "the government was not willing to implement any communalizing of household tasks, or of effecting that 'radical reeducation' of the male psyche promised in 1917. In retrospect, it is also evident that the USSR's commitment to women's equal employment has never been ideological; it has been based, rather on pragmatic, demographic factors—rapid economic growth, labor shortages, and a frequent deficit in the male population."

Still, Gray remains firm in her belief that the-operation-was-a-success-but-the-patient-died. The phrase "original Bolshevik ideals" occurs frequently throughout the book, usually in conjunction with disparaging remarks about Stalin (the initial "betrayer" of these ideals) and Brezhnev (whose period of "stagnancy" wrought further damage). Lenin alone remains untarnished, largely for his scarce and obscure writings on women: to wit, " . . . the building of socialism will begin only when we have achieved the complete equality of women."

What Soviet women really need, concludes Gray, is a dose of American-style feminism. Gray's assumption that Soviet women are frustrated in this quarter is quaint. While in Leningrad, Gray meets with Olga Lipovskaya, the editor of one of the few feminist magazines in the Soviet Union. Lipovskaya acknowledges that her publication has "a few dozen readers, mostly 'progressive-thinking men.' " From her, Gray learns that *feministika* is largely a derogatory term in the Soviet Union, and she nearly weeps upon hearing another woman—a "progressive and an outspoken champion of all liberal causes"—casually ask, "Doesn't the very definition of 'feminist' mean a woman who absolutely hates all men?"

There is no mistaking the patronizing tone of Gray's explanation for this lack of interest in feminism. Soviet women's "hostile misreading of the Western women's movement" Gray attributes to their "cultural isolation." Underprivileged things; they "have never had access to our basic feminist texts, and have only caught echoes of the outdated radical voices of the 1960s 'movement.' "

There are two key lessons that emerge from *Soviet Women*. The first is that whenever government policy concentrates on the workplace and the collective at the expense of the individual and the family, it is inevitably women who are hardest hit. When essential consumer goods and services are scarce, the burden falls on women to find ingenious ways to put food on the table, and to clothe and educate the children.

The second is that seemingly frivolous consumer goods and services turn out to play an important function in a society. As the interviews in this book show, it is no trivial matter whether men and women have harmless outlets for their tensions. As one woman put it (displaying the typical condescending view of men), "One of the problems is that men are like big children, and in our country they don't have any toys. Over in the States your men have a car, community groups and bars and coffee shops where they can meet their friends. Here they have no clubs, no cars to play with, no decent apartments where one can either be private or receive friends properly . . . " Adds her friend, "And so all our anger and violence are always brought back to the home, the family."

According to Gray, improvement in the conditions of Soviet women and relations between the sexes will hinge on the introduction of new attitudes into that country. Russian men, she notes, have for too long regarded women as martyrs, a role many Russian women have embraced. Gray would change this state of affairs by importing feminism and urging a different worldview on the Soviet people.

It is far more likely, though, that to the extent that Soviet women are martyrs, this is simply because too much is being demanded of them, from too many quarters. A Safeway down the street and a microwave in the kitchen are a sure-fire cure for martyrdom, and it is safe to assume that a healthy dose of economic growth would have vastly more transformative power in Soviet women's lives than would the widespread distribution of feminist literature. This is not to say that some fine-tuning of attitudes might not be wanted further down the road, and there might even be a role for American-style feminism. But if *Soviet Women* teaches us anything, it is that the first order of business should be to make daily life bearable, even pleasurable, as it often is (despite our griping) in the West. □

## IN THE ARENA: A MEMOIR OF VICTORY, DEFEAT, AND RENEWAL

Richard Nixon/Simon and Schuster/384 pp. $21.95

Saul Lewis

*In the Arena* is Richard Nixon's strangest—and in some respects most interesting—book. Earlier works were built around specific themes: alerting the public to the dangers of Soviet expansionism, mapping out a strategy to deal with Gorbachev, or examining the nature of political leadership.

By contrast, *In the Arena* seems unfocused. With chapters on "Time," "Temperance," "Reading," "Conversation," "Memory," "Television," "Enemies," "Friends," "Philosophy," and "Causes," it sometimes rambles all over the place, and may well cause even the most die-hard Nixon partisan to wonder what on earth the Old Man is up to.

Perhaps the best way to approach *In the Arena* is to think of it as Richard Nixon's advice to a young man about to embark on a political career. How should he conduct himself? What pitfalls should he avoid? And how should he groom himself for leadership? These are the kinds of questions that *In the Arena* seeks to answer.

Mr. Nixon's starting point is that no one should embark on a political career unless he has a powerful sense of mission. "What separates the men from the boys in politics," he writes, "is that the boys seek office to *be* somebody and the men seek office to *do* something." Politics is, or ought to be, a high and honorable calling. Only if you are prepared to devote your life to a worthy cause should you contemplate a political career.

But even if you are prepared to dedicate yourself to a great cause, Mr. Nixon cautions, politics might not be for you. For in recent years, politics has grown "more simplistic, less subtle, less thoughtful." The main reason for this change is television. "Any candidate," Mr. Nixon writes, "must learn to use television. He will be dismayed to find that whether he has had his hair blown dry may be more important than what he has between his ears. He may insist that he wants to be a legislator, not an actor. But unless he learns to be an actor, he will never have a chance to be a legislator."

But television is not the only factor debasing the political process. The press is also culpable: "The press used to consider itself part of the fabric of society, with a shared stake in America's prosperity, the health of its institutions, and the success of its initiatives around the world. When they had to criticize, they did so as part of the team. But today the media consider themselves outside of and above society at large, looking down haughtily as they fire thunderbolts at the rest of us."

Mr. Nixon offers the political novice some mordant advice on how to handle the press. When a journalist approaches a public official with the line, "I really want to write a positive story," this usually means "that the subject should watch his back, because someone is about to stick a knife into it." Similarly, when a reporter is halfway out the door and suddenly remembers "just one more question," public officials should "forget the other ten he asked; this is the one he really came for." In general, Mr. Nixon advises politicians to treat the media with respect. "You should help them do their job," he suggests, "provided that they don't do a job on you."

A third factor that has changed politics for the worse is the high cost of

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financing a campaign. Mr. Nixon estimates that even taking inflation into account, it costs five times as much to finance a campaign for the House and Senate today as it did forty years ago. As a result, idealistic young congressmen who come to Washington to do good are shocked to find themselves spending an inordinate amount of time "schmoozing with their PACs and fat cats at private cocktail parties."

This deplorable situation leads Mr. Nixon to propose that the terms of House members be extended from two years to four. "This would mean that for at least two years of his four year term, a Congressman could be a Congressman rather than a perpetual candidate spending 75 percent of his time raising campaign funds and campaigning for re-election."

The reason it is so important for a congressman to be a congressman is that only by diligently applying himself to his craft can he acquire the expertise necessary for leadership. And while there are obviously many areas in which a young congressman can develop expertise, Mr. Nixon leaves little doubt that as far as he is concerned, foreign policy remains the crucial arena: "I have often said that the American economy is so strong it would take a genius to wreck it. But even a small mistake in foreign policy could bring destruction to the United States and even to the world." That is why a young politician who aspires to greatness must make American foreign policy his priority.

In discussing U.S. foreign policy, Mr. Nixon quite reasonably focuses on Soviet-American relations. And, as always, his comments are worthy of serious consideration. "Many observers," he writes, "now proclaim that the Cold War has ended. . . . They are right to draw attention to the potential importance of the reforms inside the Soviet Union. But they overstate the extent to which these reforms have changed the fundamental structure of the Soviet system and the nature of Soviet foreign policy." For example, despite his commitment to "democratization," Mikhail Gorbachev has actually concentrated more power in his hands than any Soviet leader since Stalin. And the hallmark of his "new thinking" in foreign policy has been "shrewder tactics, not kinder intentions."

Mr. Nixon also focuses a good deal of attention on China. He is adamant about the danger of imposing harsh sanctions against the PRC in the wake of the Tiananmen Square massacre. "Contact with the West represents a principal impetus for reform," Mr. Nixon writes. "Isolating China with sanctions will close off a major stimulus for the economic reforms that have already improved the lives of the Chinese people and for the long-term political change that will lessen the repressiveness of the regime's rule."

How to handle the Russians and how to deal with the Chinese are complicated questions over which even the most astute scholars and policymakers might disagree. To a young politician, however, developing a general framework with which to approach foreign policy is far more important than staking out positions on specific issues.

Mr. Nixon provides such a framework. He calls it "pragmatic idealism." Nixon's approach to foreign policy is idealistic in that he believes "our goal should be to make the world safe for freedom." As he explains it:

> We should engage in this cause not just for others but for ourselves. De Gaulle once said, "France was never true to herself unless she was engaged in a great enterprise." I have always believed that this was true of the United States as well. Defending and promoting peace and freedom around the world is a great enterprise. Only by rededicating ourselves to that goal will we remain true to ourselves.

But while remaining true to our high ideals, we should pursue them in a way that takes into account the world as it is, and not as we might like it to be. "In a perfect world, we would never resort to the use of military force, or align ourselves with countries with flawed human rights records. But the world is not perfect." Hence, we must temper our idealisms with prudence, pragmatism, and a sense of the possible.

The greatest challenge to a politician, however, comes not from the dilemmas and complexities of foreign policy, no matter how important these may be. Rather, it comes when he loses an election, and is summarily cast out from the center of events to the periphery. It is then that his character faces its most severe test.

Mr. Nixon, of course, is no stranger to shattering defeats; and his account of how he coped with them is perhaps the most moving part of his book. "At some of the low points of the past," he writes, "I have been sustained by recalling a note Clare Boothe Luce handed to me right after Watergate first broke, when she was sitting next to me at a meeting of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. It was St. Barton's Ode: 'I am hurt but I am not slain! I will lie me down and bleed awhile—then I'll rise and fight again.' "

These are good words for any politician—young or old—to keep close to his heart. Come to think of it, they are pretty good words for the rest of us as well. □

MY TURN: THE MEMOIRS OF NANCY REAGAN
Nancy Reagan with William Novak/Random House/384 pp. $21.95

"WHAT DOES JOAN SAY?" MY SEVEN YEARS AS WHITE HOUSE ASTROLOGER
Joan Quigley/Birch Lane Press/224 pp. $17.95

Terry Eastland

Ronald Reagan was the first President in fifty years to redirect both domestic and foreign policy while achieving re-election and maintaining party unity. He was almost certainly the most successful and most influential President since Franklin D. Roosevelt. And yet there will always be those two women to take into account—First Lady Nancy Reagan and her astrologer, Joan Quigley. Last fall Mrs. Reagan published her memoir, and now Quigley has come out with hers.

I know: it's odd to call Quigley's book a memoir. She never worked in the White House nor was she on the government payroll. (Nancy Reagan paid her privately, but relax, you ethicists: a First Lady can do that.) Yet over the phone, from San Francisco, Quigley routinely advised Mrs. Reagan for almost the entire Reagan presidency. I suppose she's entitled to write her account of the Reagan years. Almost everyone else has. Quigley's book is a "bounce" off Mrs. Reagan's book, which itself was a "bounce" of sorts off Donald Regan's memoir, which revealed the astrology business in the first place. I don't expect anyone will want to bounce off Quigley's tome, in part because it also happens to be an apologia pro astrologia, with charts and a glossary of terms. There is much silliness here, including the observation that the press is ruled by Pluto. Quigley even tries to reconcile astrology with the Bible.

According to Mrs. Reagan, her relationship with Quigley was the result of the assassination attempt on her husband in March 1981. Reaching out for "help and comfort in any direction you can," she found Quigley (through the middleman Merv Griffin). She used Quigley's "astrological advice" to "protect Ronnie." Once or twice a month, she phoned Quigley to review her husband's schedule for the next few weeks. Quigley advised as to which days were "safe" or not for travel, and Mrs. Reagan accordingly asked for adjustments in the schedule, some of which she says were made. Never, writes the First Lady, did Quigley influence policy. Her relationship with Quigley, which she characterizes as a "crutch" that became a "habit," lasted until Regan revealed it in 1988. Mrs. Reagan was furious when that happened. "I [became] the laughingstock . . . the

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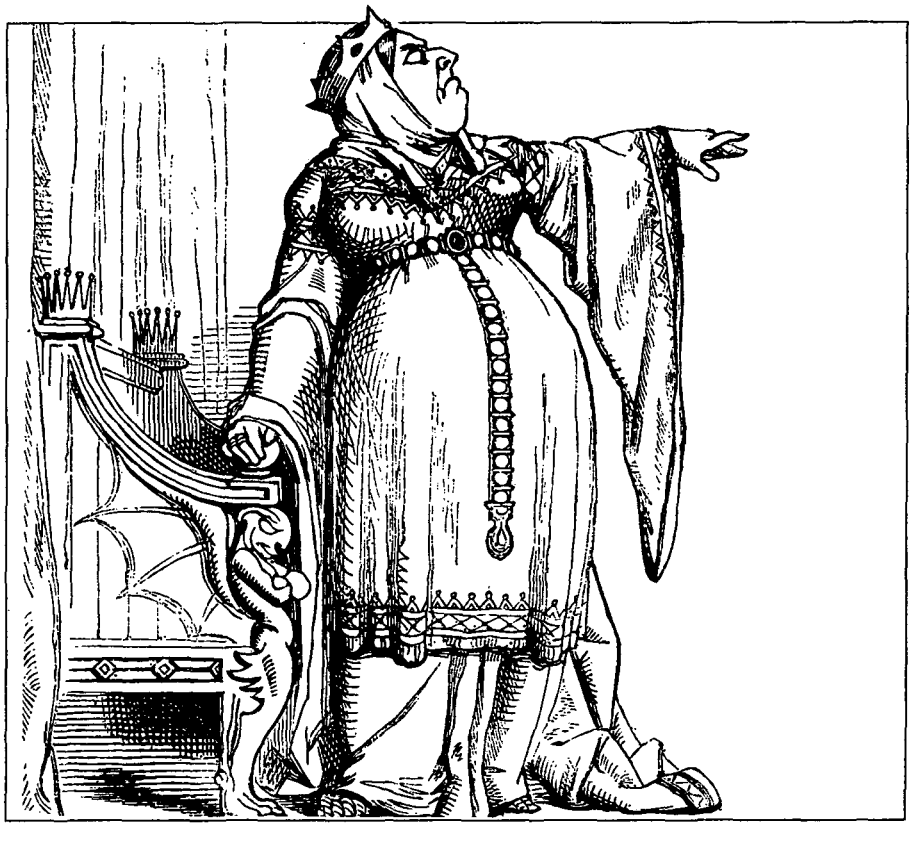



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butt of countless jokes on television, radio, and in the press." Mrs. Reagan pleads for understanding: astrology was her way of "coping with trauma and grief, with the pain of life." "Don't criticize me," she writes, "until you have stood in my place."

Well, Quigley does criticize, though from Nob Hill. Here is her review of *My Turn*, from the first page of *What Does Joan Say?*: "What she has left out about the way she used astrology and my ideas would fill a book," namely, the one that follows, which she summarizes at the outset:

> I was responsible for timing all press conferences, most speeches, the State of the Union addresses, the takeoffs and landings of Air Force One. I picked the time of Ronald Reagan's debate with Carter and the two debates with Walter Mondale; all extended trips abroad as well as the shorter trips and one-day excursions, the announcement that Reagan would run for a second term, briefings for all the summits except Moscow, although I selected the time to begin the Moscow trip. I timed congressional arm-twisting, the second Inaugural Oath of Office, the announcement of Anthony Kennedy's Supreme Court nomination. I delayed President Reagan's first operation for cancer . . . and chose the time for Nancy's mastectomy.
>
> I recreated Nancy's image, defused Bitburg, erected a chart for the INF Treaty. . . .
>
> I was heavily involved in what happened in the relations between the superpowers, changing Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire" attitude. . . . Improved relations, glasnost and perestroika may, in some small measure, have come out of this.

No immodest woman, Joan Quigley. But how influential was she? On the evidence presented in her book, she didn't influence policy; Nancy Reagan was right about that. But as to Quigley's influence upon the President's daily schedule of events, including trips and the like, I'm prepared to believe that Mrs. Reagan has understated it, that Quigley's account is closer to the truth. Why? The same reason that the First Lady hired Quigley in the first place: to "protect Ronnie." I'm also prepared to believe Quigley's claim that Mrs. Reagan asked her to "lie"—the "last word Nancy ever said to me"—about their relationship once it became public in May 1988. Again, the point was to "protect Ronnie."

I respect a wife's protecting her husband, especially one who is President (although lying raises its own set of questions). Yet from her own account Mrs. Reagan seems to have gone about the task without sufficient care. For example, her memoir does not take up the serious question of whether she should have been concerned about the potential danger to her husband resulting from Quigley's intimate knowledge of his schedule. What if Quigley had revealed it to the wrong people, even inadvertently? What kind of protection would that have been? Fortunately for everyone concerned, Joan Quigley was discreet.

Mrs. Reagan also didn't think it important to tell her husband at the outset about how she was "protecting" him, thanks to Quigley. One of the few bits of news in her memoir is the fact that the President, a man of publicly avowed Christian faith, didn't know what his wife was up to. Just how long he was in the dark, Nancy Reagan does not say. At some point—it will take a brave reporter to determine precisely when—she finally did tell him about her "private project."

Mrs. Reagan proudly recalls her husband's reply. "If it makes you feel better, go ahead and do it," he said, adding that it might look "a little odd if it ever came out." The President was right about that. But his treatment of her, which included no protestations based on faith or Scripture (she makes almost no reference to her own faith in this volume), is telling. Here as on other occasions with aides and associates, Reagan was willing to indulge or ignore rather than deal with the matter at hand.

Not that *My Turn* provides any intentional insights into Reagan Administration policy. As Nancy Reagan says, this is a book about relationships: with her mother and stepfather, her husband "Ronnie," her children and stepchildren, some Hollywood friends, Reagan's political aides, the news media, even Raisa Gorbachev (and Joan Quigley). There are some affecting portraits drawn, most notably of her mother Edith, and her stepfather, Dr. Loyal Davis. But her relationship with "Ronnie" is central.

"To Ronnie, who always understood," the book's inscription begins. As her memoir shows, the quality others sometimes lacked Ronnie had in full supply. Ronnie always understood, even if he or she, or both, or even their children, might be hurt by whatever she was doing from (always) good intentions. Mrs. Reagan does not ask whether her husband should have sometimes been less understanding. To do so would be unsettling. On her own admission, she is the misunderstood woman, and has been for years. For all the support she has given her husband over the years, here she makes clear it is Nancy Reagan in this relationship that is the most important fact of her life.

"My life didn't really begin until I met Ronnie," she writes. Or: "He seems to need only one other person—me." It is essential to her self-understanding that her husband must feel as she does. "I don't think he will ever forgive Don Regan for writing that book."

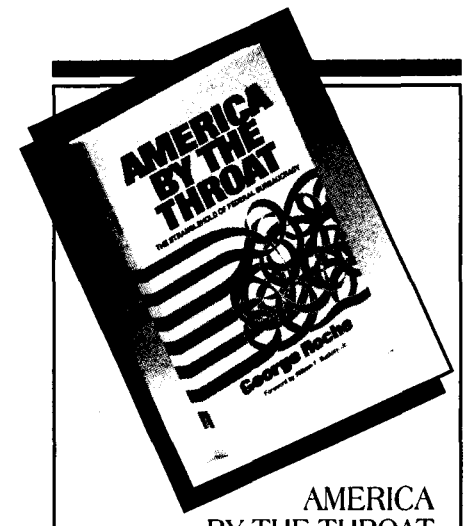
Mrs. Reagan's care in tending her relationship with her husband has had a variety of consequences, not all of them happy. Mrs. Reagan admits that she has been a better wife than mother. All of their children "have felt at one time or another that Ronnie and I were so devoted to each other that there wasn't room for them in our affections, and that they were somehow left out." When Patti was three months old, Mrs. Reagan left her with a housekeeper while she went to be at Ronnie's side during a two-week turn he did at a nightclub in Las Vegas. "It almost killed me" to leave her, she says. But first things first—this was, after all, a critical point in Reagan's career. Patti to this day remains the most distant of the Reagan children; in fact, she is estranged from her parents, writing thinly veiled, unflattering fiction about them.

One cannot read parts of this memoir without feeling great sadness for all the Reagans. Almost plaintively, Nancy Reagan concludes her inscription in *My Turn* with a reference to "my children, who I hope will understand."

*My Turn* has not been well received. The reasons are evident. Mrs. Reagan trivializes and passes by important questions. She never comes to grips with a key question about her tenure as First Lady: Did she always use her position of influence upon the President wisely? She writes unbalanced, negative appraisals of key aides, such as James Baker, who contributed much to her husband's political success. And she is the queen of "woe-is-me." Hard as her life may have been, others have had it harder.

Last fall Nancy Reagan told *Newsweek* that she wrote the book because of what her critics were saying. "I was seeing and reading what was said and it was very frustrating not to say, 'That's not the way it was.'" Frustration unfortunately shaped composition. More time might have led her to write a more compelling book—assuming the material for one is there. Amazingly, she writes almost nothing about her anti-drug effort. It'll remain for Lou Cannon and Edmund Morris, Reagan's biographers, to tell us more about Nancy's roles as wife and First Lady than Mrs. Reagan has.

It is tempting to blame Mrs. Reagan's handlers for this book. Otherwise, it's hard to explain why a famous ghostwriter (William Novak), a top agent (Morton Janklow), and a prestigious publisher allowed this work to appear in its current form. Also, one has to wonder whether the public-relations conscious Nancy Reagan ever passed this book around to the politically astute friends often mentioned in the text—people like Katharine Graham and Meg Greenfield of the *Washington Post*. That newspaper savaged her book, and I can't imagine that Graham or Greenfield—or any other of her wise friends—ever saw a draft. *My Turn* is not Nancy Reagan's best profile. On the other hand, it may be accurate. □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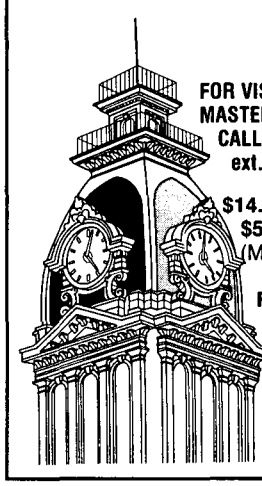

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## WARTS AND ALL: THE MEN WHO WOULD BE BUSH

Matt Ridley/Viking/281 pp. $19.95

James Bowman

"Dr. Tocqueville," as some cretin of a proofreader has dignified him in this book, has a lot to answer for. Since his time (a century and a half ago, for those who may be in danger of thinking him the product of one of our contemporary Ph.D. mills), the idea of coming to America and telling the inhabitants what queer fish the rest of the world thinks them has struck far too many foreigners as the means to fame and riches. Now, for those who may be interested, it has so struck Matt Ridley, an Englishman, Oxonian, and Washington correspondent for the *Economist*. He has written *Warts and All*, a book about the 1988 election campaign that invites the inevitable comment: "Matt Ridley, you're no Dr. Tocqueville."

Well, we mustn't blame him too much for that. Nobody is (including Tocqueville). But his big insight here, that the American President is really more like a pre-Cromwellian British monarch than a democratic leader, was expressed earlier and better by his fellow countryman, Wyndham Lewis, who was an observer of the country in the Roosevelt/Truman years: "The American presidency is a magistracy comparable with that of the Dalai Lama and with nothing else on earth." Well said, Wyndham. Charles I is a feeble analogy by comparison. Ridley uses him rather than the lovable old Lama, however, in order the better to make his own Roundhead sympathies clear. Hence, I presume, the title. Cromwell's asking to be painted "warts and all" is usually taken to be an example of his own humility; here, apparently, the allusion points to his admirer's willingness to daub in everybody else's warts—and maybe to add some by way of artistic license.

For the paradox of a book like this one is that, while purporting to be a gander at America from the outside, with all the freshness and originality that that promises, it is in fact written out of such a superficial knowledge of the country that it relies for its insights almost entirely on the conventional wisdom of the press corps, which seems to comprise the majority of Ridley's American acquaintances. Perhaps by way of compensation, the press corps gets something of a bashing. Or, rather, the folkways of the American media do. Here, for example, is the author's discussion of the relationship between news, analysis, and spin-doctoring in "the game" of reporting the candidates' debates:

> It starts in a fake environment that is supposed to be a sample of the real world: the focus group. The focus group produces a result, which is treated as news by the television, where it is seen by an alert campaign staffer, who launders the information by passing it through a real politician (reporters quote politicians), who passes it on to a reporter, who passes it on to his reader in the guise of analysis. The reader, in the real world, is influenced by it. And that is news.

And that is fun, as games should be. But the horror that Ridley feels at such incestuous goings-on suggests that he takes them to be somehow typical of America rather than just of politicians and the media, more or less throughout the world.

Indeed, his credulity about the American electorate is surpassed only by the credulity he attributes to the electorate itself. If the voters refuse to pay more in taxes to bail the politicians out of their budget deficit, it can only be because the Public is, in William Hazlitt's words, a "mean, stupid, dastardly, pitiful, selfish, spiteful, envious, ungrateful animal." If the people are prosperous and vote to continue in that state, it can only be because some clever Republicans have created an "illusion of prosperity." If the word "liberal" has become a pejorative, it is because Ronald Reagan made it so. He "equated it in people's minds with statism, with big, bossy, greedy, central government, taking more than it gives." And the people believed him! Fancy that! And then they believed Bush when he equated the word with permissiveness—which Ridley acknowledges as one of its meanings. The scandal of it! What did the poor liberals ever do to be so calumniated among the simple peasantry?

The author, that is, has got rather carried away by his analogy. If the President is a divine-right monarch, a throwback to the days "when people fell for ideas like that," then his subjects must be dupes atavistically—strange survivors of that curious breed of suckers which populated medieval Europe. And here is an excuse for the world-weary modern European, who is so much more enlightened nowadays, to set a few dollars against his overdraft by telling the colonials how much behind the times they are. In the words that he uses to express his outrage at the inauthenticity of "Win one for the Gipper" (the real George Gipp never said that!): "Is humanity not an ingenious thing?"

Of course, there is never any shortage of Americans ready to feel guilty because their country is governed according to principles that do not come up to the standards of modern, enlightened Europe. Michael Dukakis for one. Accordingly, Ridley seems to have bought into the idea that the election was (or should have been) about competence rather than ideology. Nor should it be held against him that that formulation now seems like a very bad joke in Massachusetts. The important thing to him was that Li'l Mike, like Jimmy Carter before him, stood for the demythologizing of American leadership (as well he might!)—something that Ridley sees as a prerequisite for the rest of the program as recommended by European-style social democracy. But we cling perversely to our mythologies, and Ridley, like so many Englishmen before him, can't for all his love of America see why it should be so unless some sort of hoodoo is at work out there in the countryside where the press bus never penetrates.

It is true that there is always some value in looking at one's own world through the eyes of an outsider, and Ridley for most of the book makes an effort not to let the more boring of his prejudices show. As the race comes down to the wire, however, he allows himself to relive some of the anguish that he no doubt felt at the time—letting slip, for example, that the second debate went badly instead of "badly for Dukakis" or approving John Sasso's view that Bush's responsibility for the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut was the "moral equivalent" of Dukakis's for Willie Horton's crime. Where he stands a little further back from his partisanship he is more interesting. But, on the whole, for those who followed the election closely and who already know something about America, this is at best an unnecessary book. □

*James Bowman is American correspondent for the* Spectator *of London.*


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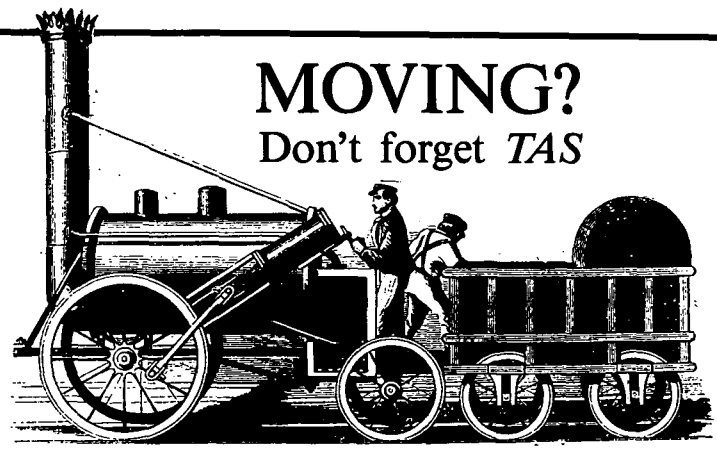

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## PARK AVENUE: STREET OF DREAMS

James Trager/Atheneum/294 pp. $24.95

Richard Brookhiser

One hundred and fifty years ago, trains running south to New York along the path of what would become Park Avenue frequently killed wandering cows. One hundred years ago, the nascent street had a brewery, a piano factory, and tenements full of Irish immigrants. Fifty years ago, *Fortune* called it "a spine of metropolitanism"; the *New Republic* saw it as a fruit of "the mass production of millionaires." New York has other streets as renowned —Broadway, Wall Street—but they are renowned for activities: entertainment, money making. Park Avenue became famous as the embodiment of a state of being: being rich.

James Trager strives to pack all its history and its resonance between two covers. At times, his book reads like a list of buildings and tenants. But what buildings, what tenants.

We meet Ward McAllister, who was in the Clarendon Hotel on Park Avenue South, then Fourth Avenue, when he said there were only 400 people in New York society (the number that could fit into Mrs. Astor's ballroom). We meet Andrew Haswell Green, goo-goo reformer and trustee of this and that, who was shot dead, at the age of 83, on the stoop of his house by a jealous gunslinger who mistook him for the wrong octogenarian. We meet Martha Bacon, who lived at No. 1 Park until the city decided to extend the area designated by the avenue two blocks south, thus boosting her residence to No. 7. She went to court to keep her number, and lost, though the *Social Register* never used the hated innovation, giving her address as "northeast corner of Park Avenue and 34th Street." We meet names Fitzgerald would have hesitated to invite to Jay Gatsby's: Alfred Coster Schermerhorn, Tibor de Nagy, Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel.

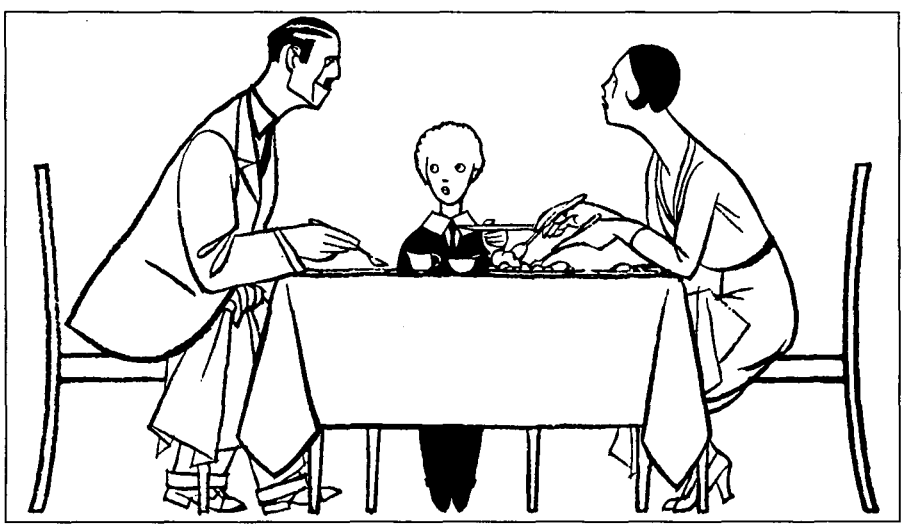
But the most important people we meet, as far as the avenue's development is concerned, are Vanderbilts. Cornelius van Derbilt (that was the way he spelled it for most of his life) was born on Staten Island and made his first fortune in ferries. When railroads came in, he shifted his field of operation. Van Derbilt bought city councilmen and state legislators like so many potatoes, in order to obtain land and rights of way, thus proving that sweetheart deals are not new to city politics. Neither is treachery: twice rivals bribed the pols to revoke their favors, so that van Derbilt would go bankrupt. But he simply turned around and bankrupted them first. He cut the time of a trip from New York to Chicago in half, and left a fortune as large as the cash on hand of the federal government. William Henry Vanderbilt, his son, when asked if he wasn't running a particular train for the benefit of the public, replied famously, "The public be damned. I am working for my stockholders." After that, the blood ran thin, but Vanderbilts still pop up in Trager's tale: William K., Jr., who collected marine specimens in the Galapagos; Harold, who codified the rules of contract bridge and defended the America's Cup three times.

The Vanderbilts and the railroad empire they built, the New York Central, owned much of the real estate in the heart of the avenue, and their decision, pressed on them by the city, to sink and electrify their tracks allowed the avenue to develop. But their greatest contribution to its opulence was Grand Central Terminal, which manages simultaneously to be as big as a steel mill—33.7 miles of underground track, forty-eight platforms—and imposing as a palace. The star map on the concourse ceiling depicts 2,500 stars; the sixty largest shine with the correct celestial magnitude. Mercury, Hercules, and Minerva float in Indiana limestone over the main facade: "a monument," in the words of Whitney Warren, the architect, "to the glory of commerce . . . supported by moral and mental energy." It is user-friendly to boot. "You get off a train," wrote the architecture critic Paul Goldberger, "and all you do is walk. Penn Station was never as natural and simple a thing as Grand Central."

But every building, it seems, yields a paper in sociology. The Harold I. Pratt House, at 68th Street, built for the youngest son of a kerosene magnate, became the headquarters of the Council on Foreign Relations: the curve of a class, from acquisitiveness, to responsibility, to impotence, in one address. Albert Kobler, an Austrian immigrant who edited William Randolph Hearst's *American Weekly*, built himself a little apartment building at 75th Street; his unit had an onyx and gold bath, a tapestry of Cardinal Woolsey's, and a dining room ceiling copied from the Uffizi. Robert J. Cuddihy, who launched the *Literary Digest*, financed a building at 89th Street, because other co-ops wouldn't let in Catholics. Paul Wallahora, a doorman at 90th Street, had been working there, as of last year, since 1928 (talk about feudalism). In 1984, Kyu-Sung Choi, an ambitious Korean, opened a deli across the street from Kobler's old digs, and Trager wisely turns the story over to William Geist, who covered it for the *New York Times*. "I don't like it being here," one old, minked lady told Geist. "But then I don't have to do the food shopping. One has someone to do such things." But another resident found that "when the chips were down and she had to have brandied apricots at 11:30 p.m., 'by golly, Mr. Choi had them.' "

This altar to the worship of industry and its rewards, this hymn to the heroism of getting and spending, felt two shocks in the postwar world. One emanated from Bauhaus. In 1952, Lever House introduced glass to Park Avenue. Five years later, Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building became the next notable structure in the new style. The Canadian distiller who owned Seagram's gave the job of designing the building to Mies at the insistence of his daughter, who had studied architecture at Vassar. "You might think this austere strength, this ugly beauty, is terribly severe," she said. "It is, and yet all the more beauty in it."

I am of two minds about these buildings. They do reflect the bluntness of money and power, and while people seem to be tiring of the Four Seasons restaurant in the Seagram Building, the Pool Room still thrills me. And yet the progeny of these structures is monstrous. There will always be ugly buildings. What we need are ugly buildings we can live with. We can barely live with the masterpieces of the International Style. "The first thing to say about the new architectural mode," wrote John Updike, when he was doing "Talk of the Town," "is that it leaves one with little to say. It glossily sheds human comment." And human contact.



The bigger blow was the collapse of the railroad business. Trager correctly identifies the villains: the New York Thruway, and the St. Lawrence Seaway. (Those who live by government favors, die by the favors given to competitors.) The New York Central merged with the Pennsylvania Railroad, only to go bankrupt. Along the way, Penn Station was demolished. Grand Central survived, but suffered indignities. The gross bulk of the Pan Am Building was reared over the shed area north of the terminal. In search of still more cash, the railroad proposed to plunk another tower over the terminal itself. Let 'em plunk, a libertarian would say. That's why I'm a conservative.

Trager includes a chapter on "the other Park Avenue"—Spanish Harlem, and the homeless. Since the homeless, and the countermeasures that have been necessary to discourage them, have made Grand Central Terminal all but useless as a place where a ticket-holder can wait at ease for a train, their inclusion in this book is altogether appropriate.

But I would give the last word to Whitney Warren. The pompous sculptures gesturing over 42nd Street, he said, "attest that this great enterprise has grown and exists not merely from the wealth expended, nor by the revenue derived, but by the brain and brawn concentrated upon its development." Park Avenue is a monument first of all to mind, only second to money—however many puny-minded legatees inhabit it. Think of that the next time you're snarled there in rush hour. □

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*Richard Brookhiser is a senior editor of* National Review *and a columnist for the* New York Observer.



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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 7)

something like their actual due. After all, fair is fair, and we certainly wouldn't want to seem *unjust* or anything, my goodness, no.

Does your quarry have a distinctive style (idiosyncratic sentence structure, heavy on parens and italics and the like) with forays into stream-of-consciousness and plain chattiness? Such as can be effectively burlesqued by any old high school journalist? Even better! You can make her look really silly that way. The parodists of the past convinced generations of half-baked undergraduates that Wordsworth, Joyce, Faulkner, and any number of other writers were all humbugs.

Was she obliged to write an ad hoc speech about a terrible disaster, and was it well received? The Lord has delivered her into your hands. Point out that today more people remember the speech than the victims who called it forth—but mind you, don't forget to remind everyone that that's *all her fault*, just as it is Lincoln's fault that our schoolchildren can't tell you who took Little Round Top and saved the Battle of Gettysburg, and Churchill's fault that few Englishmen can name any of the RAF pilots to whom so many owed so much. This is a killer card, so play it well. Americans hate a show-off. I mean, you'd think she'd have had enough respect for the dead to write a *mediocre* speech for them instead of hot-dogging it like that. But some people will stoop to anything.

What about her opinions? You say she fares well according to the usual ideological checklists? Not to worry. If her beliefs will not serve your turn, you can always act as if her mode of holding them does. She's a writer, you say? There's your opening. She will, perforce, have spent time hanging out with other writers, most of whom are liberals. Does she actually have friends among the wretches? You've got her! To be a "real" conservative you must have not only the party opinions but the party hatreds. Just between us, Edward Kennedy would not have come within one brake job of the White House without having the *capacity* to act graciously on isolated occasions. But *saying* as much? Surely that is for lesser breeds without the law. And so with other liberals, insofar as she says anything nice about them.

This coin has its obverse. If she perceives qualities in the bad guys, does she notice any flaws in the good guys—or in any subset of them? So she speaks well of the likes of William Bennett, Pat Buchanan, Gary Bauer, Paul Weyrich, William Casey, and others not well-liked at the offices of *Spy*. No matter. She can't praise everybody. More to the point is a sad fact. In any government—still more in any mass movement—there will be numerous people who can't write, can't think, can't do much of anything—can't even be pleasant. She will have encountered some of these. Does she spare them, or is she candid about their unlovability? In the latter case, work a little alchemy and transmute this into "mocking the GOP." (If you are quick about it, no one will have time to ask how the whole party came to be equated with the cliques who oppose her.) Take the line that the whole Reagan entourage, down to the last file clerk, was a Knot of Stainless Friends, to be spoken of only in language that would be considered fulsome at the court of Kim Il-Sung. You wouldn't believe how many conservatives are still insecure enough to insist on a policy of *pas de bozo a droit* This is your constituency. Court them with zeal, and they will gladly believe that a girl who fairly slops over with corned beef and cabbage is really a creature of brie and Montrachet who "follows the common wisdom of her new class" (among whom, as we all know, opposition to abortion is a dead sure sell).

Thus, the cram course in being an accredited Pegophobe. Mrs. Eberstadt was clearly valedictorian of her own class. But what's the point? Put another way, what is "the thing" about this essay, and why would Mrs. Eberstadt risk bile depletion to produce it? The "glory hog" thesis has been pretty much pounded into flinders. Her opinions are both rock-ribbed and largely unfashionable, so the "vicaress of Bray" thesis won't fly. Forget about the dying convention of the speechwriter's *omerta*; even Mr. Buckley has given up on that one. And the "snob" thesis won't bear even the most sidelong honest glance. So why was the chamber pot emptied on Peggy Noonan's devoted head?

Hmmm. At State from 1985 to 1987, were we? Comes the dawn. Consult the index of Mrs. Noonan's *Revolution* and you find:

> Dunlop, Becky Norton, 175
> Dunning, Bruce, 38
> Eden, Anthony, 344
> Edwards, Douglas, 22, 28

Why am I not surprised?

*—C. H. Ross*
*Nashville, Tennessee*

*Mary Eberstadt replies:*
Curses! Just when it seemed that my devilish trick of quoting Miss Noonan seventy-six times had succeeded, along comes a subscriber who



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skips the quotes and reads the *index*.

I wish I'd thought of that. If I'd just read the index, I wouldn't have had to doublecheck those quotes. Best of all, I'd have been spared chapter after chapter about those sexist, bigoted, narrow-minded, mediocre, jealous, wimpish, creepy, short, and otherwise unattractive people who worked in the Reagan Administration.

Miss Noonan's memoir, to put it gently, drips with personal animosity and contempt. For that matter, so do most of the public accounts flowing from Reagan's former employees. I don't know why so many of those employees can summon less respect for one another and the President they served than a reader from Tennessee can summon for one of them. I do know which type of person makes the better public servant. C. H. Ross, Washington has need of you.

**Big Government Barnes**

The conclusion of Fred Barnes's April essay on Big Government Conservatives—"since we're going to have big government anyway, it makes sense to have conservative big government"—is like one of those Escher drawings that grows less intelligible the longer you look at it. What would a "conservative big government" be? I am confident that Mr. Barnes means something more substantial by the phrase than merely a regular old big government that dispenses plum jobs to people who attend CPAC dinners. But what precisely?

I imagine that Mr. Barnes's answer would go something like this: "A conservative big government is a government that spends and regulates in roughly the same quantities as the government does now, but does its spending and regulating in ways that enhance the efficiency of the economy, the stability of the family and the hopes of the poor for upward mobility." But that's exactly what liberal big government tried to do.

Conservatives would be less easily seduced by the allures of the big state if they were less prone to assume that their political opponents were venal idiots. The people who launched Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty did not intend to wreck the black family, lure the poor into welfare dependency, and promote crime and public disorder. Their ideas were, in fact, highly reminiscent of those of some contemporary conservative anti-poverty warriors. The Great Society began, after all, with a withering critique of the New Deal for its bureaucracy and authoritarianism, for imposing top-down solutions, for encouraging dependency and for micro-economic irrationality. The Johnson Administration promised that, in contrast to the statism of the 1930s, its program of social reform would be market-oriented and community-based; that it would liberate the poor by freeing them to make decisions for themselves.

Obviously, these schemes went completely wrong. But they didn't go wrong because they happened to be administered by liberals. They went wrong because modern governments behave in certain characteristic ways regardless of the beliefs of the people nominally in charge of them. America's nearly ten years of conservative big government since 1981 ought to have proved that point by now.

*—David Frum*
Wall Street Journal
*New York, New York*

**Cranston & Co.**

I have no brief one way or the other for Alan Cranston ("Alan Cranston's Big Lies," by Buck Long and L. V. Cott, *TAS*, April 1990), but cannot the notion that the murder of Carlo Tresca in January 1943 was an unsolved case be laid finally to rest? Simply, Tresca was murdered by Carmine Galante (himself murdered ten years ago) almost certainly as a paid assassin for Frank Garofalo, an associate of Generoso Pope—and the evidence, marshaled by Dorothy Gallagher in her recent biography of Tresca, is for the world to see.

True, Tresca himself raised a smokescreen of Communist responsibility, but this was almost instantly dissipated by reliable information supplied by a Milanese lawyer, Giuseppe Calabi, a full statement by Galante in prison to a long-time informant, Emilio Funnicello, and a full set of circumstances which showed that Tresca had invited the attack by a public insult directed at Garafalo in a manner that called for the murder. District Attorney Frank S. Hogan decided not to prosecute Galante because the evidence was not legally available or (in his opinion) not sufficient to sustain a conviction—but the historic fact was beyond dispute.

Indeed, Norman Thomas, Roger Baldwin, Dorothy Kenyon, and other ACLU friends were convinced that the Homicide Bureau was seeking to cover up a fascist conspiracy—and pressured Hogan to have me head the investigation as assurance against such a cover up. I later had the pleasure of denouncing the unconscionable campaign of vilification directed against my fellow assistant district attorney, Louis Pagnucco, who was zealously pursuing the investigation to the limit.

As to Cranston, I never heard of him in those days but certainly the OWI was consulted. Nothing came of it but the knowledge that the future government of Italy was the subject of intrigues in the Mazzini Society—of which Tresca was then a picturesque gadfly, but hardly the weighty influence his admirers posthumously claimed for him. Stephen Schwartz's *Commentary* article is the usual guff that follows the murder of a political personality.

*—Eleazar Lipsky*
*New York, New York*

*Buck Long and L. V. Cott reply:*

It is curious to find that, nearly fifty years after it took place, Eleazar Lipsky remains committed to whitewashing the Carlo Tresca murder. We obviously hit a major nerve with our brief, passing reference to this affair and Cranston's involvement in it.

The Tresca case remains unsolved with regard to the motive of Galante, the acknowledged triggerman. Lipsky is absolutely wrong when he says the argument for Communist responsibility in the matter was "almost instantly dissipated." Indeed, this possibility was brought up again in a pamphlet published in 1945, as well as in Miss Gallagher's book, *All the Right Enemies*, published in 1988. Lipsky is less than candid about Miss Gallagher's conclusions: although her book offers a final explanation presupposing a murder provoked by an insult, she does not completely discount Communist involvement. Further, she herself shows little confidence in Lipsky's basic approach to the case.

Carlo Tresca may have been killed because he insulted Frank Garofalo. However, notwithstanding the many legends about Italian criminal gangs, police reporters and investigators have long observed that killings over trivial matters, including verbal insults, are rare in such history. So, also, are killings of outsiders. For the mafia, execution is a matter of business.

That in 1943 the mafia, already under pressure from U.S. authorities, would kill one of the best-known figures in Italian-American intellectual and political life over a remark at a social event, as has been argued, seems unlikely.

It has also been argued that the mafia killed Tresca as "a favor to Mussolini," although at the time the murder took place Mussolini's regime was already crumbling; again, it is difficult to believe they would select so prominent a victim for so petty a profit.

What seems no less likely than either of these explanations, from our perspective, is one advanced at the time: that the killing of Tresca was, indeed, a matter of business, with Galante hired by Soviet agents. Connections between Galante and the Communist-controlled American Labor party are mentioned in Miss Gallagher's book, but without further elaboration.

If Lipsky never heard of Cranston at the time of Tresca's death he must have been deaf, as well as blind, since the controversy between Tresca's friends and the OWI was prominently featured in the *New York Times* and other papers. The description of Tresca as "a picturesque gadfly" shows that Lipsky really knows very, very little about the Italian-American labor movement and Tresca's role in it.

As for Mr. Schwartz's review in *Commentary*, guff it may be, but it is quoted at length on the cover of the paperback edition of Miss Gallagher's book.

**Tea Time**

Richard Brookhiser's Russian Tea Room item (*TAS*, April 1990) reminded me of the following incident: In 1942 I spent three days military leave in and around that place. They had red caviar, Beluga, even smoked sturgeon. More important, they had numbers of ballet girls dropping in after their performance. While I was waiting for my ballerina date, being the only uniformed hero present I was invited to sit at a table of alleged notables. They turned out to be Mike Gold, Samuel Sillin, and another Communist party leader (name unknown). With them were two (or three?) Russian officials. The American hacks were barely sipping their vodka with toasts for "the great Marshal Stalin," while the Russians gulped their drinks and were obviously bored. Finally the youngest Russian leaned toward me. "You got lady friend?" I nodded. "You fix me up? I get laid?" My *nyet* caused the left to condemn me ever since.

*—Leslie Woolf Hedley*
*Sonoma, California*

**ACLU 1, *TAS* 0**

On the day that your eagerly awaited April 1990 issue hit the rack at the local bookstore, the Commie-lib proprietors of that emporium were donating their profits for the day to the ACLU.

I had no choice. There was nothing to do but hover over the rack and read the damn thing. Between articles I would pick up copies of *Interview* and *Mother Jones* and pretend to peruse them. I escaped without being detected.

Sorry. Maybe next month.

*—Matt Isch*
*Batesville, Mississippi*

**Update**

In the May "Continuing Crisis" column, R. E. Tyrrell reports:

> The San Francisco Zoo's red kangaroo, Skippy, became the first zoo animal in world history to receive a pacemaker and has apparently been returned to his old vigor.

Skippy is dead.

*—Douglas Rose*
*Oakland, California*



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# THE UTNE SPECTATOR

## INVASION OF THE WATERMELONS

by Micah Morrison

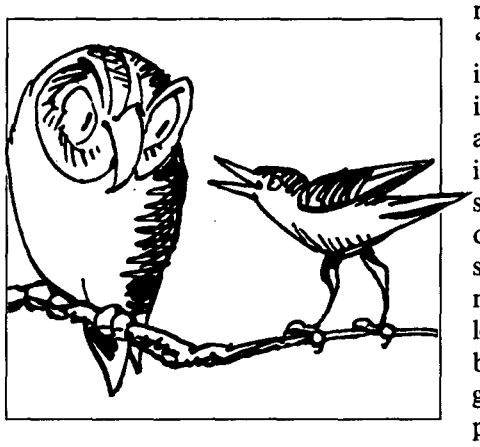
*Minneapolis*

It's been called "the left-wing *Reader's Digest*," and Eric Utne's idea of publishing "the best of the alternative press" six times a year has turned out to be one of those simple strokes of magazine genius. The *Utne Reader* is wildly successful, and Utne himself continues to demonstrate that he has his finger near the weird pulse of liberal-leftism. From May 17 to May 20, here in the heartland, Utne orchestrated the "Early Warnings" conclave, billed as the "first gathering of the global alternative press" for "an international conference on media and the environment." Flocking to the Twin Cities were some 300 environmental activists of moderate and radical stripes, graying illuminati from the sixties, New Age types, journalists, editors, plus a sprinkling of freelance troublemakers, artists, masseuses, and the marginally sane. Debate ranged from the apocalyptic to the anguished and the absurd. "I am a tree, my roots are deep," a woman suddenly declared at a workshop, proceeding to tell of her rewarding struggles against chemical dependencies and her trip to Nicaragua.

The central question confronting the gathering: Is the "mainstream media," also known as the "corporate media," an ally or an enemy? The central assumption: The End is Near. "We are running out of time," said Barbara Pyle, Turner Broadcasting System Vice-President for Environmental Policy and CNN Environmental Editor. "The planet is at the end of the rope." Five plenary sessions examined environmental and communications strategies. Twenty-three workshops probed eco-activism in the media, on the land, and in the body politic. The tone of the weekend was set by Ralph Nader in a luncheon address entitled "Media and the Solar Age," in which he lamented the conservative bent of the *Washington Post*, described a "decentralized" form of solar energy fueling America, and sketched anew his paranoid vision of vastly evil corporate manipulation of society and the planet.

*Micah Morrison is* TAS*'s roving correspondent. He is working on a book about the Yellowstone fires and environmental politics for Harper & Row.*

Nader was nonetheless full of pep, having emerged from "the Dark Ages" of the Reagan years to continue the battle against "increasingly homicidal institutions." Yippie anarchist gazetteer Paul Krassner was there. *Nation* editor Victor Navasky was there, as was self-styled "Texas populist" Jim Hightower, futurist Hazel Henderson, President Lester Brown of Worldwatch Institute, Berkeley city council member Nancy Skinner, and a host of advanced jedi from such starships as Greenpeace, Earth First!, Rainforest Action Net-



work, and the Sierra Club. Captain Ecology was there, in a green frog suit and cape. "Facilitators" from the Council of All Beings were there and gave your correspondent a briefing on engaged Buddhism, meditative transfer to states of flora and fauna, and the growing New Age eco-religion of Gaia, a form of earth worship. ("You're not a conservative," facilitator Victoria MacDonald told me as I left, "you're a coyote." Can't I be both?)

There were, everyone agreed, not enough "people of color" there, but there was a computer room for exercises in networking and there was, courtesy of conference attendee cable-TV channel VH-1, an eco-action music video featuring prophets Oliver Stone, Martin Sheen, and Jackson Browne. Ted Turner's CNN emissaries were, as they say, *a major presence*. And there was a literature table of hallucinatory length, covered with a shifting array of hundreds of pamphlets, print-outs, and magazines. A sampling: *High Country News*, *Liberation News Service*, *Hazardous Waste News*, *Vegetarian Times*, *Family Circle*, *Giaologues*, *Hemp for Ecology*, *Animals' Agenda*, and my personal favorite, *Nude & Natural*, featuring environmentally aware naked bowling.

At the most emblematic of the weekend's panels, reporters and editors addressed "Challenges and Limits of Advocacy Journalism." With the exception of *Time*'s science editor Charles Alexander—cast as the apologetic liberal, browbeaten by the panel, and at one point shouted down by the audience for daring to suggest that the media have not undergone quite the "corporate consolidation" the gathering assumed—the assembled journalists espoused an aggressive left-wing agenda. Not only was the sky falling in and the planet careening toward destruction—yesteryear's imminent peril of nuclear war having been neatly swapped for today's imminent environmental catastrophe—but the real problems were capitalism, racism, classism, bourgeois consumption of material goods, apathy and ignorance. The people, in short, are stupid and must be led by the noble advocacy journalists of the left. All pretense to fairness and honest reporting was thrown out the window.

"There is no such thing as objective reporting," said *Boston Globe* reporter Dianne Dumanoski, to general agreement. "I've become even more crafty about finding the voices to say the things I think are true. That's my subversive mission." Mark Hertsgaard, a black-clad media critic from *Rolling Stone* and National Public Radio, agreed that there is no such thing as impartial reporting and modestly noted that "the media is in an absolutely pivotal position in the race to save the planet." All the panelists, again with the possible exception of the man from *Time*, clearly had a very high opinion of themselves and their mission. "I do have an axe to grind," said Barbara Pyle of CNN. "I want to be the little subversive person in television."

Michael Lerner, the yarmulke-wearing editor of the lefty Jewish journal *Tikkun*, working the crowd on the Jewish sabbath, brought the audience to its feet with an eloquent, angry attack on capitalism and the "irrational market forces" at the root of ecological problems. Lerner's fevered performance, and the audience's reaction to its implicit violence, reminded me of my old acquaintance, the lunatic Israeli, Rabbi Meir Kahane. A libertarian told me that the radicalism represented by Lerner and the others was a matter of some uneasiness on the environmentalist scene. "They're called watermelons," the libertarian said of Lerner. "Green on the outside, red on the inside."

Eric Utne's weekend in Minneapolis turned out to be another attempt by the left to devise strategies to broaden the environmental movement and bully its liberal media cousins into submission. The media are enemy *and* ally. The attempt to shape a coherent strategy met, as usual, with little success, since there is a huge worm turning inside the apple of American leftism. The pose that there is "no truth, no objectivity" of course is a deeply fraudulent and cynical one. What the left means is: *we* are in possession of the truth, and everything else is a tissue of lies.

In addition, there was nothing really "global" about this event—the collapse of Communism was the Great Unmentioned—and it was dominated by incessant attempts to cement the environmental movement to every cause the left has championed. The energy was impressive, as were the flashes of wit and fun. This seems to be the recipe for the success of the *Utne Reader*, too: a witty mix of oddball items, news-you-can-use, liberal pieties, plus a dose of hard-left politics.

As to the dreams of the left, the only way the environmental movement will hit the critical mass lusted after by the attendees—that state of grace located in an almost entirely mythic version of the 1960s—will be if the United States suffers an ecological disaster of the magnitude and drama of Chernobyl. Out on the fringes of the environmental movement, there are eco-terrorists who would not shrink at such a scenario. Unfortunately, that's not the kind of story you'll read about in the *Utne Reader*. □



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Three days later I was riding with another person, in a large Dodge van, when I saw something like a large animal crossing the highway. I noticed it hide itself in the shrubs on the meridian. Strangely enough, just as we were passing the animal's hideout, it purposefully jumped directly in front of the car and was caught by the wheels. We stopped, went back, and found a large, beautifully marked bobcat in the last throes of death. At this moment I experienced a feeling of recognition and sensed the same coming from the bobcat's eyes. I had had a great desire to have a bobcat pelt but had not wanted to be responsible in a direct or indirect way for the death of any animal. Now this bobcat had caused its own death by intentionally and in full consciousness throwing itself under the wheels of my car.

*[from* The Healing of Emotion: Awakening the Fearless Self, *by Chris Griscom, Fireside/Simon and Schuster, $8.95 paper]*

**Times-Union**
(Rochester, New York)

A loyal member of *The American Spectator* audience suffers his very own *Kristallnacht* via the goose-steppers of the National Organization of Women:

NOW's local chapter claims ultra-conservative Rush Limbaugh's radio talk show is "spewing out virulent sexist language and sexist comments," and they've called upon WHAM (AM-1180) to cancel the show.

Limbaugh, widely known for his outspoken, often outrageous comments, today called their efforts "an example of the new fascism."

"The new fascism is sensitivity," said Limbaugh in an interview from his New York City office. "I don't express the proper sensitivity they would like to hear on the radio. . . . I think that it's another example of the Left in this country, the people who purport the right to do what they want with their own bodies, now trying to deny me the right to do what I want to do with my voice and vocabulary."

*[May 2, 1990]*

**New York Times**

Dr. Anthony Lewis of the Goo Goo Institute gives credit where credit is due:

There are Americans on the extreme right who will not be content unless Moscow is ruled by a Romanov restoration or turned into a salt plain.

*[May 29, 1990]*

**San Jose Mercury-News**

The advance of civilization as reported by Miss Laura Baione Hayden in the *Hartford Courant* and reprinted in the *San Jose Mercury-News*, God knows why:

When I was a child I never counted trash cans. The neighbors, however, did.

"How do you manage to have so little garbage?" my mother was asked more than once.

"We eat our garbage," she would reply succinctly.

*[April 17, 1990]*

**New York Times**

Religious news on the emotional development of twenty-seven problem children, chewing their nails in downtown Manhattan:

Twenty-seven women gathered in a downtown loft this weekend for a seder. They celebrated the deliverance of the Jews in Egypt from slavery more than 3,300 years ago, they prayed over the four cups of wine and the matzoh, they ate the ritual foods of bitter herbs and haroseth that symbolize suffering.

But when they asked the questions usually posed by the four sons, they asked them as daughters. When they recited the 10 plagues, they were not the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians, but those endured by women through the ages. When they opened the door, it was to welcome not Elijah, but Miriam, the prophet and sister of Moses.

The occasion was the annual seder conducted by a group of feminist . . .

*[April 9, 1990]*

**Denver Post**

Another "racial incident," this time committed by clowns of the Negroid and Caucasian variety:

A rally by peace and social activists sparked uncomfortable moments yesterday after about half a dozen homeless people literally stumbled onto the scene and told the small crowd to go home.

"Get out of our park," several homeless blacks shouted to the gathering of whites during the outdoor gathering in Sonny Larson Park, 24th and Welton streets.

"Go sit on your portable lounges and watch your big-screen televisions," Charles Taylor, a bottle of wine stuck in his belt . . .

*[May 9, 1990]*

**Toronto Globe and Mail**

An American Shakespeare makes another misagelastic point:

Independent filmmaker Henry Jaglom—*the* most successful independent filmmaker in the United States, according to *Newsday*—recently confessed to the *New York Times*, "I'm still trying to become one of the girls." He expanded on that confession earlier this week during a visit to Toronto to promote his latest comedy-drama about relationships, *New Year's Day*, which opens here today: "I have the bedroom of a teen-age girl, frills along the side of the bed and stuffed animals on it. I am . . . a male lesbian."

A *what*? "Well," he laughs, "I *like* women, I like them in general better than I like men in general, and I always have. I think many heterosexual men, and some gay men, don't really like women. When I was growing up, I would listen to the conversations of my father and his male friends; they were talking about money, power, the structure of things outside themselves. The women were talking about who loved whom, about feelings, about what things *mean*. So at the stage when the boys were off playing with each other and going, 'Yuk, girls,' I was off with the girls going, 'Yuk, boys.' Years later, when my wife left me . . ."

*[April 6, 1990]*

**New York**

Progress:

Attunement to nature and one's own inner wisdom, the idea that "every woman is an extension of the Earth Mother," as [Susun] Weed [who runs the Wise Woman Center in Woodstock, New York] proclaims, is an attractive ideal to harried, fragmented urbanites, especially at a time when the death of nature is being prophesied.

Some of the events at Weed's Woodstock center are earthy, indeed. At last year's "Blood of the Ancients" retreat, held over Labor Day weekend, "we re-created the sacred moon lodge, or menstrual hut," recalls Weed, "and reawakened the old blood mysteries of woman's creativity—pregnancy, birth, lactation, menstruation, and menopause. We reclaimed the blood of peace, thereby bringing an end to war." Living conditions at the center are said to be less than idyllic. It "is really just a shack on a former stone quarry," says one participant, "but there's a beautiful stream and waterfall—you should have seen us, about twenty women all nude at the waterfall."

The plumbing is problematical. "You can't flush the indoor toilet often because it will overflow and there's just one portable toilet outside, so women have to squat on the ground," she says. "After a few days, they stop wearing underpants. There are lots of goats, so you're walking in human and goat s--- all the time. For dinner, it's great—Susun just goes out and picks all sorts of greens and flowers for a big salad."

*[June 4, 1990]*

**New Republic**

Greetings from exotic Europe from Sidney Blumenthal, connoisseur of urine in a jar, bullwhips in an anus, and all the other marvels of America's modern Caravaggios:

Outside, one can spot a few grizzled old men, who probably remember everything, slowly walking past fashionable boutiques. There is no fascism and no communism. What do they now think about the Spanish Civil War? The rest of Spain thinks about Pedro Almodóvar's latest film, and why the culturally conservative Americans have such a thing as an X rating for it. One of Spain's best and brightest, a woman who had worked in a high-level job in the Ministry of Defense and who now develops policy for the whole Cabinet, was asked for her impression of contemporary America. Censorship, she said; cultural conservatism. Her view was not an aberration. Throughout the leadership classes of Europe, America's reputation has been badly tarnished by the crusades of right-wing primitives. With the security question receding, the cultural factor may be more salient than anyone in the philistine Bush administration grasps. In Europe cultural conservatism is part of the discredited past; in some places, including Central Europe, this is a very recent, very miserable past. How well can America stand for the new when it insists, through repressive gestures, on sustaining the old? With the demise of the cold war, American conservatism may turn out to be mainly a form of cultural isolationism.

*[June 11, 1990]*

**Santa Barbara News-Press**

A communiqué in the correspondence section of a great daily from a fellow who would not make a very good neighbor unless, of course, you had a bushy tail:

The reason this planet is in such bad shape environmentally is most people are ignorant as to what's going on, or even worse, they don't care.

For example, garbage thrown into the ocean can kill dolphins or other marine life. Garbage thrown on the ground can kill squirrels or chipmunks who eat it and can't digest it and die. Toxic chemicals dumped into the ocean poison fish, which are caught and eaten by humans.

Think how nice this planet would be with no humans. The air would be super-clean, the oceans super-clean. But no! Humans came along with their ignorance and greed and have just about destroyed this planet.

Depending on personal beliefs, God or nature made one big mistake, and that mistake is humans.

Many caring people are trying to save this planet, but I believe it's too late; the damage is irreversible.

*—Charles LeCompte*
*Santa Barbara*

*[April 22, 1990]*



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*I am especially appreciative for what I take to be your courage in speaking out on the "wrong" side of the drug issue in the April issue. —E.W. (Texas)*

*The letter [about Freedom Daily] from the Polish citizen was very interesting —and, again, living proof, as you often maintain, that ideas do have consequences, even world-wide. Also, Richard Ebeling's article, "Education, Businessmen and Economic Freedom," is well written and right on the mark. I've never met him, but he seems to complement, very well, your outstanding ability and freedom ideology. The articles on our asinine drug laws in the April "Freedom" are some of the best I've ever read. —B.H. (Florida)*

*One of the best buys in recent months has been Freedom Daily; and now I find even more useful information coming with my subscription. I refer to the article on "Education, Businessmen and Economic Freedom" which states more clearly than anything I have read to date, the probable reasons for academia and the media, and businessmen, continuing to beat an obviously (to me) dead horse. I liked your analogy of government welfare being one of the most dangerous drugs of all. —C.B. (California)*

*Excellent material—not the least Richard's piece, "Education, Businessmen, and Economic Freedom," continues to issue from FFF. I am impressed, as are many others, and look forward to the next issue! Keep it up! —B.L. (Wisconsin)*

*The stated principles of your Foundation and your work are worthy of the highest praise. I am thankful that there are at least a few people who cherish freedom and truly understand its value and the identity of its author. —A.E. (Texas)*

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*Wow, what an impact your publications had on my mind and the thoughts I seem to share with you. —G.J. (Texas)*

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*I just, this morning, read your March addition to the flag controversy and found it stimulating and informative. Bringing a bit of Texas history to the uninformed could never hurt. And you went all the way in presenting the stark contrasts on nineteenth and twentieth century conceptions of individualism and governmental responsibilities. Definitely no compromise! —M.D. (Illinois)*

*What a mess we are in! You write so well! My "quality" is failing rapidly. At age 83 and with severe diabetes, what can one expect? I'm enclosing $25 and hoping you/we never give up in **our** fight for freedom! —W.R. (Florida)*

*Your "Open Letter to Russell Kirk" uses some of the best arguments ever in defense of the true libertarian ideals. You truly know your stuff. I was particularly impressed with your references to Jesus Christ—I have long believed Him to be the first Libertarian as well as our Savior and Master. Keep up the excellent work. —S.T. (Virginia)*

*Thanks so much for each edition of Freedom Daily. We really enjoy all of it. The "quote of the day" is a super idea. I would like 10 copies of the April 1990 [drug law] edition to give to my grown-up children, my pastor-friends, and my conservative politician friends. What a job on a difficult topic! —J.B. (Illinois)*

*Your April and May materials were powerful for me. I am a Jewish believer in Jesus. I reached my decision for precisely the reasons you have given for no compromises, because sin is sin, and the worst approach to its correction is through government. People need to make free God-given choices to be either for Him or against Him. There is no middle ground or compromise ground. —A.S. (California)*

*Bravo! Yours is among the best and most constructive ideas I have yet seen put into action. Freedom Daily is a great way to keep the freedom philosophy foremost in mind. The monthly appointment book format was an inspiration! —S.C. (California)*

*My only regret is not finding you sooner. Are back issues and information available? —S.T. (Virginia)*

**—January 1990: First month of publication, *Freedom Daily*.**
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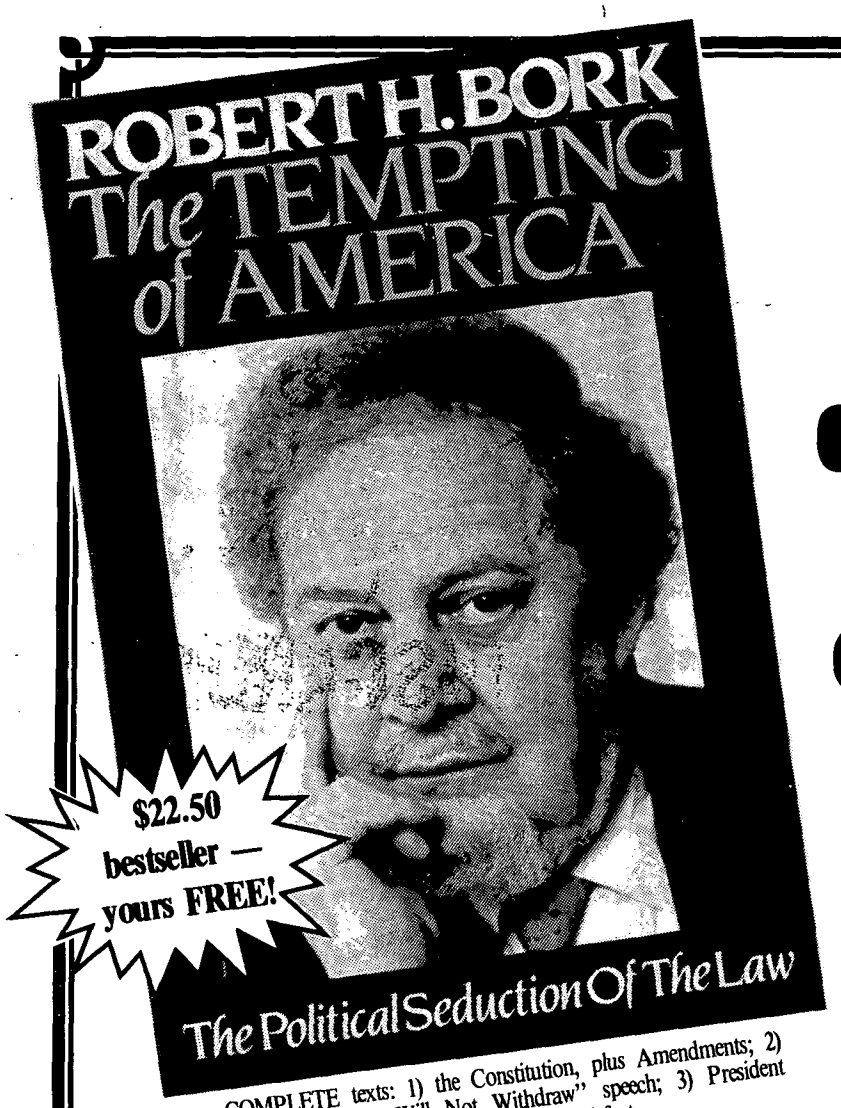


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